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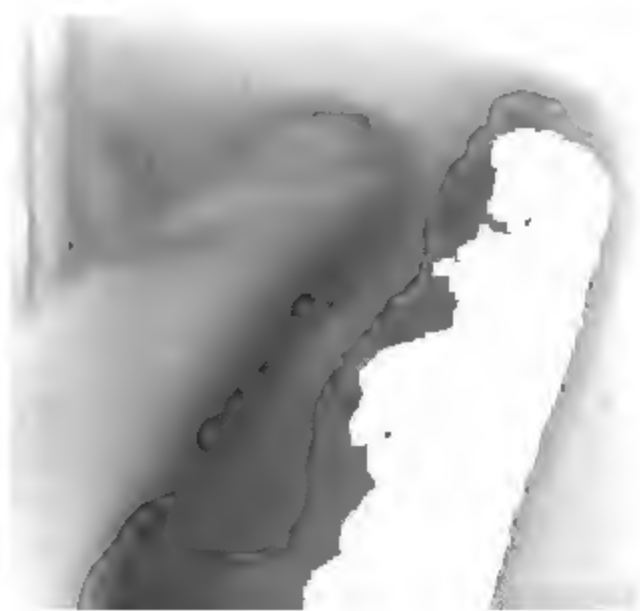
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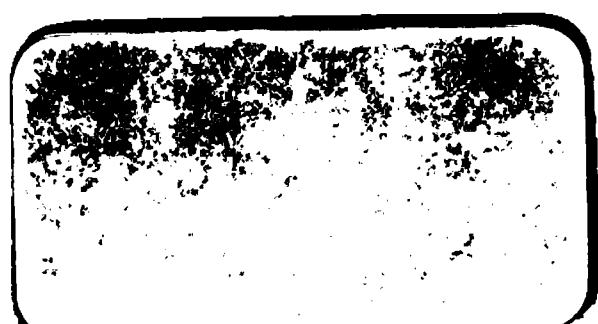
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DIGEST OF HOOKER
ON
ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.

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ON

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BY THE
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A
D I G E S T
OF
HOOKER'S TREATISE ON THE LAWS
OF
ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.

BY THE
REV. J. B. SMITH, D.D.

OF CHRIST COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
RECTOR OF SOTBY AND MARTIN; HEAD MASTER OF HORNCASTLE GRAMMAR
SCHOOL; AND MEMBER OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE.

FOR THE USE OF STUDENTS.

“ Πάντα εὐσχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω.”—1 COR. xiv. 40.

“ Certainly it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in Charity,
rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of Truth.”—LORD BACON.

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TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD LYNDHURST.

MY LORD,

IN availing myself of your Lordship's kind permission to place the following work under your patronage, I am fully sensible of the small pretensions it has to so high a distinction.

As, however, it is an attempt to give a succinct view of the reasonings of a writer, the acute perspicacity and comprehensive grasp of whose master-mind produced very important benefits to the Church of England, at a most critical period of her history, and caused the soundness of his judgment to become proverbial in every subsequent age; this consideration may, perhaps, form some excuse for associating with such a work the name of your Lordship, as that of a kindred mind, whose superior natu-

ral endowments, and profound acquirements, have raised its possessor to deserved pre-eminence, and placed him in the very first rank amongst the Worthies of the present generation.

It is not, indeed, for me to do justice to those rare qualifications, which enabled your Lordship, whilst occupying the distinguished station of first Judge in the Land, to discharge its arduous functions with such singular ability, as caused your decisions to carry with them the conviction of truth, and to be received with implicit and almost universal confidence; or which, in your capacity of Senator, have proved you to be one of England's most eloquent and able Statesmen: these truths are generally admitted, and will go down to posterity, recorded in the annals of these eventful times.

It only remains for me to say, that whatever may be the fate of the work itself, one reward of my labour is at least certain, in the gratification thus afforded me of paying my humble tribute to the excellencies of your Lordship's character; as also of expressing my sincere gratitude for the kindness I experienced individually at your hands,—when, although an entire stranger, and recommended to your

notice solely on the ground of being a diligent instructor of youth, you generously condescended to become my benefactor.

In the earnest hope that your Lordship's life and health may long be spared to your Country,

I have the honour to remain,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's much obliged and

very obedient servant,

J. B. SMITH.

HORNCASTLE, *Jan. 1st, 1840.*

(*Martin Rectory.*)

P R E F A C E.

IN venturing to send forth the following Work to the public, the author is painfully conscious of the charge of temerity, that may be probably brought against him, for presuming to meddle with the works of so distinguished a writer as Hooker ; or to imagine that any attempt of his can elucidate the reasonings, or enforce the arguments, of so admirable a genius and profound a scholar, raised up apparently by Providence, at a most eventful period of the English Church, to save her from lapsing into an unsound Theology, and to fix and settle her on the solid basis of Evangelical Truth, and Apostolical Discipline.

To such a charge, however, he at once pleads not guilty. His only object has been, to endeavour to make the works of that erudite and able theologian, more accessible to the younger members of his profession ; and to induce a more general perusal of his

writings, by attempting to give a simple outline of his arguments, and a brief sketch of the principles and reasonings, whereon his Ecclesiastical Polity is founded.

For, indeed, it is generally admitted, that high as is the character of the work itself, and rich as it is in stores of learning and information, on most points connected with theology; yet, unfortunately, its peculiarity of style,—(peculiar at least to modern ears)—its dry logical disquisitions, and subtle controversial arguments, cause the young reader, who has been attracted by the fame of the author, not unfrequently to lay aside the work, in a sort of disappointed hope, and with a confused feeling of inability to comprehend and master its arguments. And if the Author has been fortunate enough to succeed in his object, and, by removing any of these difficulties, thereby to contribute to a more extensive reading of the original Work, his labours will be fully repaid, and his hopes satisfactorily answered.

There seems, moreover, a peculiar coincidence between the events of the days of Hooker, and those of the present times. The Church of England, in his day, was assailed by all the subtlety of Popish

recusancy on the one hand, and all the rude violence of Puritan nonconformity on the other : whilst each party was filled with the sanguine hope of rising triumphant on her overthrow. The position of the Church at the present moment is too painfully obvious, to render any words necessary, for proving the appositeness of the remark ; or to require an apology for calling the attention of the public, in these trying times, to that “ warning voice of antiquity, and treasure of primitive maxims and sentiments, so seasonably provided for the Church.”

For though in it the reader will find many topics, perhaps, discussed and dwelt upon, with an earnestness which their apparently trifling character may seem to him to render quite unnecessary ; yet there are also many others, of most grave, deep, and vital importance, handled with the skill of a Master, which cannot be perused without singular edification and benefit, by every serious Christian man : and this more especially, when many of those points are now violently agitated, and the Church is assailed by a variety of contending factions ; by some of whom her Scriptural services are condemned, as formal and

profitless; and by others, her very existence is denounced, as altogether useless.

But whilst thus stating the motives that have led to the present publication, the author must also add, how fully sensible he is of his own insufficiency, and inadequateness for the task. It was commenced some time ago, at the suggestion of a valuable and talented friend,—now alas, no more,—whose death threw such a damp over his feelings, as caused him at once to lay it aside. In the meanwhile, an excellent edition of Hooker's works came forth from the University of Oxford, edited by a singularly able and well qualified scholar, the Rev. J. Keble; which has been of much service to the author, in the latter part of the volume; and which he would confidently recommend to the use of all, who may be led by the present Digest, to have recourse to the original work itself.

Written, as it has been, in the midst of a busily occupied life, and at various intervals snatched from the laborious duties of daily professional engagements, the author must earnestly bespeak the favourable indulgence of the reader, for the very many imperfections, which he is conscious are to be found in the

volume. His sincere endeavour has been, in all points, to give a true and faithful exposition of the arguments and opinions of his great original, without the slightest partiality or bias of his own. The task, in works of such a writer as Hooker, was no easy one: and the necessary brevity of a Digest must have occasioned various omissions, and consequent obscurities, not quite satisfactory to the diligent inquirer after truth. On the whole, however, he trusts that he has not omitted any very material point, or important argument: but to what extent this is really the case, and how far he may have succeeded in his object generally, must be left for others to determine; and he has only, in conclusion, to express his fervent hope, that the circumstances he has adverted to, and more particularly the object he has had in view, may be allowed to atone, in some measure at least, for the deficiencies in its execution.

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INTRODUCTION.

It may be of advantage to the young reader, before he commences the perusal of the Digest, to be apprised of the circumstances under which the Ecclesiastical Polity was written ; for thus he may be enabled to perceive more clearly the leading objects which Hooker had in view, and to comprehend more readily the general scope of his arguments.

When the Church of England had scarcely recovered from the violent agitations, attendant upon her deliverance from the usurped authority of the Papal thralldom, there were still many points whereon Reformers themselves were not agreed ; and matters which to us may seem quite non-essential, were, by the natural heat of controversy, magnified into great importance. Hence, men were divided into parties keenly at issue ; and often bitterly acrimonious towards each other, even on subjects abstractedly not

worth contention, except, perhaps, in some cases, from their connexion with ancient and sacred associations.

These may be generally classed into three divisions: the *Romish* party, that still clung to the doctrines and customs of the Papal Church, to which they were attached by habit, and wherein they had so long implicitly, and often ignorantly and uninquiringly, acquiesced: the *Reformers* of the Lutheran school, who, discarding along with the Papal yoke, the various idle superstitions and gross corruptions wherewith the Truth had been encumbered and obscured, still, however, retained those Evangelical formularies, and Apostolical customs, which that Church, amidst all her errors, had preserved: and the *Ultra-Reformers* or Puritans, of the Calvin or Geneva party, who utterly abominated every ceremony and form of the Romish Church, and were ready to reject even what might be decent and appropriate in itself, simply because it happened to savour of Popery.

The prejudices of these latter were indeed carried to most extravagant lengths; and the whole ritual and ordinances of the Church of England, as set forth in her Liturgy, so wisely and piously selected and framed, were the objects of their unsparing and virulent attacks. Bishops were asserted to have no claim to superiority over Pastors, nor any exclusive power of

ordaining; and other distinctive and honorary grades and titles amongst the Clergy were denounced. The decent use of the surplice was violently objected to, as being Popish and anti-Christian; as was also the observance of Saints'-days, Fast-days, and Lent. Responses by the congregation during divine service were found fault with; and likewise the frequent use of the Lord's prayer, kneeling at the Lord's Supper, bowing at the name of Jesus, the sign of the Cross in baptism, the Ring in marriage, the continuance of service in Cathedrals, churching of women, and various other things, which were all denounced as papistical, vain, and superstitious. Though a set form of Prayer or Liturgy was not rejected, yet extemporaneous prayer was strenuously contended for; and above all, *preaching-ability* was considered the most essential requisite in Ministers, without which they were termed only "blind guides and dumb dogs," wasting and devouring God's heritage. Whilst to remedy these alleged grievances, they set forth *Books of Admonition*, and systems of *Consistorial Discipline*, chiefly on the model of the Geneva school, and containing the principles of doctrine and practice, whereby they contended that the Church of Christ ought to be entirely regulated¹.

At this critical period, Hooker seems to have been

¹ Called by the Puritans, their "*Platform of godly discipline.*"

providentially raised up ; and—by the energies of a powerful mind, gifted naturally with acute perception, clear discrimination, sound judgment, and sober discretion, and stored also with resources of great scholarly acquirement,—he became a powerful instrument towards settling public opinions ; staying men's minds on the sure foundation of evangelical truth, and primitive practice ; and founding a school, as it were, of Protestant divinity, to the talented and pious writers in which, the Church of England is, humanly speaking, indebted for the commanding and influential position, she has so long held in the Christian world at large.

His work on “The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity,” was not intended, indeed, to devise and lay down any abstract system of Church government ; but only to investigate and show the soundness and wisdom of that which had already been adopted ; and to defend it on those points particularly, which were most violently mooted amongst those party spirits of his day, to whom we have just alluded. And the plan of his work, as detailed by himself, is this : in the *first* book, he describes the nature of LAWS in general ; “what Law is,—how many different kinds of Laws there are,—and of what force according unto each kind :” showing the nature of divine and human Law ; the intimate and necessary *connexion* between them ; and

how the one is deduced, and flows either directly or indirectly, from the other. In the *second* book, he proceeds to argue against the Puritan tenet, that *Scripture alone* must be the rule of human action ; and that nothing whatever of human authority, in Church matters, is binding. In the *third* book, he investigates and confutes their assertion (which is a corollary of the previous one,) that Scripture must necessarily contain a *particular form of Ecclesiastical Polity*, immutable, and incapable of addition at the hands of men. Having thus laid bare the first principles, and shown the unsoundness of the Puritan premises, he proceeds in the *fourth* book, to consider their specific charges brought against the Church of England, of having “corrupted the right form of Church Polity, with manifold Popish rites and ceremonies ;” and shows that in her work of reform, having abolished all such things as were really superstitious or injurious, those she had retained were only such as were warranted by Scripture, or by the example of Apostolic and Primitive times. The *fifth* book enters into a full investigation and refutation of the specific objections in *detail* : against the whole form and practice of our public service, in the several particulars of Churches ; forms of prayer ; readings of lessons ; modes of preaching ; administration of the sacraments ; rites of confirmation, matrimony, burial, ordination ; qualifications

of Ministers; Church-endowments, tithes; choice of Ministers, and their privileges; lay-patronage; and sundry other topics; which an overweening spiritual pride and presumption had prompted the Puritan objectors to cavil at, and condemn.

But whilst the conflicting parties differed thus on matters of doctrine and ritual observance, they also disagreed on the subject of Church-government. The *Papists* maintaining the assumption, characteristic of their Church, that Supreme authority in Church matters was vested solely in their Popes and Councils; and that the civil power might only be the executor of their decrees. The *Reformers* in general contending, that the civil powers of any country, with the Sovereign at the head, were not only competent to exercise it, but that it of right belonged to them¹: whilst the *Disciplinarians* or *Puritan-party* held, that Church-authority was indeed independent of the State, but that it was vested in a Council composed of ministers and lay-elders.

And, hence, in reference to the Polity of the Church of England, Hooker's *sixth book* was designed for a consideration of the favourite position of the latter party, that Ecclesiastical jurisdiction should be vested in a mixed Council of ministers and laity:

¹ This doctrine has been generally termed *Erastianism*; though not exactly that of Erastus.

whilst the *seventh* is on the order and functions of Bishops, and refutes the objections raised against their alleged unwarranted authoritative power, and honorary distinction : and the *eighth* book, in opposition both to the Romish and the Puritan party, shows the propriety of our Sovereign being invested with the Supremacy, in Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, as being both warranted by Scripture example, and consonant to Christian practice in early times.

The first Five Books were published in Hooker's lifetime ; but though the earnest wish of his heart was granted him, that his life might be spared to finish his great work, yet posterity did not, after all, reap the full advantage thereof. The last Three Books were indeed completed by him ; but it seems that, unfortunately, the MSS. fell into the hands of the Puritans, who destroyed them¹, to serve their own purposes, in thus preventing the arguments of such a writer from appearing against some of their favourite theories ; and the books that have been published as such, are only from the notes and rough draughts which had escaped destruction, and which want the revising and finishing touches of the master-hand that originally sketched them.

¹ For further remarks respecting this, and the almost entire loss of the Sixth Book, see notes thereon at pages 303 and 304 of this volume.

DIGEST OF HOOKER

ON THE

LAWS OF ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY¹.

BOOK I.

CONCERNING LAWS, AND THEIR SEVERAL KINDS, IN GENERAL.

I. *The Cause of writing on Laws* IN GENERAL.

DECLAIMERS on the defects of government will always meet with attentive and favourable hearers, amongst the shallow and prejudiced multitude. Their plausible, though unsound objections, will readily be received by those who have not time or capacity to investigate the numerous difficulties that accompany all human arrangements; and the objectors themselves will be esteemed as patriots; whilst the prudent conservators of established laws will, on the contrary, through

¹ It has been well remarked, that this title shows that Hooker's object was not, what is often imagined, to write a set Treatise, or devise a plan for Ecclesiastical Polity in general, but only to discuss and show the beneficial operation of such Laws as our Church had already adopted, and were most controverted at the time.—*See Keble's Hooker.*

men's natural proneness to find fault, be decried, as interested self-seeking betrayers of the public weal.

Moreover, also, objections can be briefly and popularly advanced, which require sometimes an extensive, and perhaps tedious exhibition of arguments, to expose and confute. Hence, the writer on the side of existing institutions has not only to contend against prejudice, but to draw upon the patience of his readers.

Now, though it be true, that many enjoy the comfort and advantages of good laws, without much reflection on their origin; yet, when they *disobey* those laws, under a pretext of their being corrupt, then it becomes necessary to enter upon an investigation as to their source; and however wearisome such a subject may at first appear, yet by degrees it will become familiar, and even interesting.

The Laws of our Church, whereby for so many ages we have been guided in the exercise of the Christian religion,—her rites and customs,—have been called in question; and an accusation has been raised against us, as rejecting the statutes of Christ, hating to be reformed, and made subject to the sceptre of His discipline.

As, therefore, the accusation is founded upon the alleged faultiness of our Laws, the investigation may be suitably commenced, by an inquiry concerning *Law*

in general; and especially concerning that which giveth life to all the rest, namely, *the Law* whereby the Eternal Himself doth work; and thence we can proceed to the Law of Nature, and of Scripture.

II. *Of the Law which GOD prescribes to HIMSELF.*

ALL things operate for some preconceived end or object; and whatever regulateth the mode or power of operation, is called a *Law*. Now, whereas all other things work according to a law appointed by a superior, yet, in the works of *God*, he himself is both the Operator, and the Law to his own operations; and the intrinsic perfection of his nature giveth perfection to all his works¹. Hence the wise amongst the very heathens admitted a Great First Cause, whereon all things depended; who, working after counsel, reason, and order, was of necessity a law unto Himself²; inasmuch as there was no superior to control Him.

¹ The nature and perfections of the Deity come not within the scope of this work; but it may be observed, that in the Unity of God a personal Trinity subsists; and all His works are such, that each Person hath some peculiar share in them; *from the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit* all things are.

² Διος δ' ετελειετο βουλη.—HOM.

Τον παντα κοσμον εποησεν ο Δημιουργος, ου χερσιν αλλα λογψ.
—STOB. in *Eclog. Phys.*

“Ille ipse, omnium Conditor et Rector, scripsit quidem Fata, sed sequitur, Semper paret; semel jussit.”—SENECA, *de Providentia*, lib. v.

Now, though God's power be infinite, yet He seemeth to have set a certain bound or limit to His own works; and every act of His has some definite end; whilst the *ultimate* object of all His various operations is, the exhibition of His own glorious attributes, and of the most abundant virtue.

Hence they err, who suppose that God's *will* simply, is the measure of His actions. Though we may not perceive it, no doubt there is a *reason* for every act of God; for it is not stated in Scripture that God acteth simply "according to his own will," but "according to *the counsel* of His own will¹." And whatever is done with wise counsel or forethought, necessarily implieth something more than mere absolute will.

This Law Eternal, however, which God hath made for Himself, and whereby he worketh all things, being one of such vast and immeasurable extent, and embracing within its provisions the amazing fabric of the universe, cannot be comprehended or scanned by the puny intellect of man. What little of it, however, we are able, though it be even but darkly, to apprehend, we admire; the rest, in religious ignorance, we humbly adore,—in full assurance that all things are regulated by a Law, which, because proceeding from Him, is therefore absolutely perfect, just, and immu-

¹ Ephes. i. 11.

table; free also, because imposed voluntarily upon Himself; and eternal, because laid down by Him before all ages.

III. *Of the Law which Natural agents observe from*
NECESSITY.

BUT besides this Law which God hath made for Himself, there is another which He hath laid down to be observed by *all His creatures*, according to their several conditions and capacities; and which therefore brancheth out into different kinds. That part which ordereth *natural* agents, is called “The Law of Nature;” that whereby *angelic* beings are governed, is “Heavenly Law;” that which *reason* suggests or dictates, is “The Law of Reason;” and that which, being undiscoverable by reason, bindeth them by especial *Revelation*, is termed “Divine Law;” whilst what is termed “Human Law,” is a sort of combination of what may be gathered from the law both of reason and of God¹.

With regard then to the *Law of Nature*; in strictness of speech it may be considered as applicable not to intellectual and voluntary agents, but to those which *unconsciously* keep the law of their kind,—as

¹ And indeed where things do not conform to this second Law Eternal, they will be acted upon in the general operation of the first Law Eternal, and thus be subject to it; “Etiam legi æternæ subicitur peccatum.”

the heavens and elements of the world,—and which can act no otherwise than they do. This law was imposed upon them at their first creation, and its edict they have since then continually obeyed; the sun hath run his course in splendour; the moon hath walked in brightness; the stars have moved in their spheres; and the seasons have observed their periods, ever since that edict went forth: the original creation of things, and their subsequent exact preservation, both combining to manifest the force of the Law that goverus them. Other unintellectual creatures also may be here included, such as perform their functions and fulfil their office, though what they do, they know not¹; and if there be amongst these any occasional *deviation*, it ariseth from the malediction which came upon their nature for man's sin; such deviations, however, are slight, and contravene not the general proposition, that a general law directeth the whole.

And not only so; but whilst obeying this very law, whereby their own specific actions are governed, all these agents seem to be at the same time acting in

¹ What keeps Nature in obedience to her own law is obviously the higher first Eternal Law; the God of Nature is the guide of Nature; "in Him we live, and move, and have our being:" and Nature is but an instrument, as it were, wherewith He works. Hence Providence, Destiny, Nature, are only names often applied to express the same thing.

concert with some General System for the common good of Creation, taken as a whole. These natural agents, then, so admirably, exactly, and constantly fulfilling their parts, being at the same time unintellectual agents, are therefore but instruments in the hands of the God of Nature, who ordereth them severally after the counsel of His own will: and consequently the Law of Nature is but a branch, or emanation from that Eternal Law, which God hath appointed for Himself.

IV. *Of the Law by which ANGELS are governed.*

Heavenly Law is that influence which pervadeth angelic natures, the operation whereof is of a different description from Natural Law. For God, who moveth natural agents as an *efficient* only, doth move intellectual creatures, and especially angelic beings, after another manner. They are inclined to the pure and perfect obedience of the Most High by feelings of *love* and *adoration*, which prompt them to imitate the perfections they admire. And hence, not only do they rapturously proclaim His glorious attributes in Heaven; but after the example of His ineffable goodness, are the ready and joyful ministers of His will to the children of men, with whom they do not disdain

to consider themselves as conjoined fellow-servants of Jehovah ¹.

V. Of the Law whereby MEN are led to imitate GOD.

WE now come to the Law whereby *Men* are governed. And here we may premise, that God alone is supremely and immutably perfect; whilst in all other things there exists a sort of *appetency*, to assimilate themselves to that Eternal Perfection from which they sprung. The modes in which this is exhibited, are, 1st, By a desire of *continuance in being*; which, since this cannot be in the case of their own *mortal* persons, is in some sort accomplished by their having an offspring, to keep their name in being: 2ndly, By a desire after all that is most complete and excellent in its kind; wherein they imitate in some degree these perfections of the Deity: 3rdly, But the mode wherein men may chiefly be said to imitate God, is in *intellectual powers*, by the knowledge and practice of truth and virtue.

¹ Angels have fallen; and the only possible solution of their fall is, that it was caused by a reflex of their intelligence upon themselves; being taken with an admiration of their own sublimity and honour they forgot their subordination and dependance,—the bond of love was broken by self-love, and consequently their pride cast them from heaven; and being rebels, they delight in tempting others to be assimilated to themselves.

VI. *How men are GRADUALLY brought to comprehend the Law which they are to observe.*

Now, in this latter branch, man differeth from angelic beings; for these have full and complete knowledge of God already; whereas, man advances by a gradual process, from a state of utter vacuity, till he ultimately shall be perfect in knowledge even as the angels themselves. At first he is conversant only with what he receives through the medium of his senses; and herein he is at first inferior to animal creation, which have their sensible perfections earlier and more complete than he. But he subsequently rises in thoughts and views above the meaner creatures, and by the aid of reason, is conversant with loftier subjects than those connected with the mere senses ¹.

VII. *How Laws of Action primarily have respect to Man's WILL.*

IN the attaining of this knowledge, there must be some *incentive* to action; and this is supplied by the expectation of *good*, either arising in the actual performance, or as the regular result thereof. Man in

¹ Were proper aids to instruction readier, human reason might be much more improved and advanced; for education and instruction are the means whereby the reason is able to arrive at an earlier and sounder judgment between truth and error, good and evil.

this respect resembleth his Maker, and is not bound down, as natural agents, to a definite line of action, but works *freely*; having a power of action, or non-action, as he pleaseth. This constitutes what is called *Choice*.

To *choose*, is to will one thing before another; and to *will*, is to bend our souls to the pursuit of what seems to us to be good. Goodness is discovered by the understanding; and the light thereof is reason; and hence the springs of human action are *knowledge* and *will*. A distinction, however, is here to be made between *will* and *appetite*. This latter is a mere animal instinctive desire for any sensible good; as that of food when hungry; or the feeling of sundry emotions, as fear, joy, grief, anger; which seem to be involuntary, and out of our power to control entirely. Whereas *Will*, in the proper meaning of the term, is the "determination of the mind, founded upon the understanding;" and the actions resulting therefrom may be performed or stayed, at the choice of the intelligent agent.

Our reason, then, discovering that which is *good*, prompteth the will to a course of action for its attainment¹.

¹ In the common satisfying of the appetites, as of hunger and thirst, which seem to be done involuntarily, there is, however, a sort of tacit acquiescence of reason in intelligent creatures, which constitutes it a voluntary action after all. (See book iii. section 8.)

But it must be here observed, that things manifestly *unattainable* have no power to excite the will; even though, as being good in themselves, the natural appetite might desire them. And this is also the case where the difficulties in the attainment seem to overbalance the ultimate good. And hence, as there is no particular object so good, but it may have some appearance of difficulty, or unpleasantness annexed to it; and as there is likewise no evil, but it hath some apparent pleasantness; so the Will sometimes chooses actually what is evil, from an *erroneous* impression and prejudice as to the present superior value of the one above the other. This, however, is no excuse for sin; inasmuch as there never was sin committed, wherein the less good was not preferred before the greater; and if *reason* had had her proper office, and not been overborne or weakened by appetite, it would have previously appeared so to the will of the sinner; and hence he is inexcuseable. But yet this is too often the case; for the search after knowledge is painful, often disinclining the will to its pursuit, and overcoming that natural thirst after it which is ingrafted in us; and thus men are content to remain in consequent ignorance and error, leading unto sin.

VIII. *How far REASON avails to guide the Will to what is good.*

SINCE then a correct *knowledge* of what is really good or evil, is so highly important—(for if reason err, we fall into evil),—it is of special concern, that the best methods of attaining it be investigated.

Now there are but two methods whereby goodness can be ascertained; the first is by an investigation into its *intrinsic* causes; the surest, but at the same time, the most difficult; and hence generally neglected. The other is by the *external signs* which generally accompany goodness, and which, where they are, give us a sort of general warranty of its existence therein; and this latter more obvious and facile mode is usually adopted, though it be not absolutely infallible.

Of these external signs, the most to be depended upon is “the general consent of all men;” the “*vox populi*” may in some sense be taken as the “*vox Dei*;” inasmuch as what universal experience hath taught men, is, as it were, the voice of nature speaking in them, and, consequently, of nature’s God. And hence St. Paul said of the heathen, unenlightened by revelation, that “they were a law unto themselves;” inasmuch as by the light of natural reason they were enabled to learn, in many things, the will of God.

Now to judge of goodness is the province of reason, and in so doing many things are to be taken into the account. Certain matters are so obviously true, that they are admitted at once; *e. g.* “that the greater good is to be preferred to the less.” But from this general principle there flow others of a more complicated nature; and reason has to look through the intricacy, to form her determination aright. Hence the *remote* and superior good is to be preferred, though its pursuit be accompanied with present unpleasantness; and *temporary* pleasures are to be shunned when they draw after them more injurious hurt. Hence, therefore, as a man’s immortal soul is of more value to him than all the world beside, and nothing that the world could give him can make up for its loss; so present temporary afflictions are to be preferred, and patiently endured, if so be that they may work for us a subsequent eternal weight of glory. There are other axioms, which, though not so strikingly obvious, are, nevertheless, at once admitted, when propounded; as “that worship is due to God; honour to parents; equitable dealing to all.”

Of these and all other principles of action, man’s knowledge of himself, and of his relative position to others, is the foundation; and hence, as observation teaches us that things which are best produce the best results, we are led to submit the body (as being infe-

rior) to the guidance of its superior, the soul: this is the *first* principle of action; and its chief mandates are comprehended in "love to God and man;" the one, because He is the fountain of all good; and the other, because as each one desires good from his fellow-men, he must, therefore, be careful to satisfy that same desire in others which he entertains for himself.

To look at the matter more specially. Reason may be considered as giving a *mandate*, when things are absolutely good or evil; a *permission*, when of two evils, the least is to be chosen; an *admonition*, when the greater good is to be preferred to the less. And this law of reason is not only universally admitted, but comprehendeth all things, which men, by the light of understanding, may evidently know (if they choose) to be good or evil for them to do. We say *may* know, because by the force of evil custom, or utter negligence, they may not trouble themselves to know, and hence remain in evil, but, at the same time, sinful ignorance; and the light of their natural understanding may be smothered.

In all this, however, it must be remembered, that there is no faculty in any creature but what is derived from God, and needeth His perpetual aid; and should *that* ever in justice be withdrawn, then man walketh in a vain shadow, and the light that is in him is darkness. Hence (for one instance out of many, in

respect of mental blindness) sprung *idolatry*, when, in the emphatic language of scripture, “God having shut their eyes,” men bowed down even to the stock of a tree.

IX. *The ADVANTAGES of keeping the Law of Reason.*

THE observance of this law of reason necessarily produces good; whilst the departure from it, as doing violence to the natural constitution of things, cannot but be productive of evil. This departure, however, in intelligent and voluntary agents is properly termed *sin*, and the evil result is *punishment*; whilst their obedience is righteousness, and the good result is *reward*: for rewards and punishments do in themselves imply a power of *choice* and voluntary action; whereas good or harm resulting from an *involuntary* action is only a blessing or a hurt. What is done under absolute necessity is not culpable in the agent, his *will* not consenting¹; neither when the constraint or impulsive force is of a violent character, is the deviation so culpable, as under other circumstances it would be, his will being thereby overborne².

Hence, from the sundry dispositions of man's

¹ Hence madmen and imbeciles, being devoid of right reasoning faculties, are not accountable for their actions.

² Yet if we place ourselves in such circumstances as necessarily to prevent the will from coming to a reasonable choice, *e. g.* in a state of drunkenness, this palliates not the crime.

will, and the variety of circumstances in which he is placed, there ariseth a difference in voluntary actions causing a *variety* in rewards and punishments. These are inflicted by those empowered to judge our actions; and how this authority is vested in men will be subsequently examined. In the mean time, it may be observed, that, irrespective of all external judgment, every man carries an internal judge of his actions, in that he has a “*conscience*, approving the good and condemning the bad,” and causing an involuntary expectation of reward or punishment from the Great Author of Nature¹.

X. *How Reason leads men to frame HUMAN LAWS for the government of Bodies Politic and Social Communities.*

It is evident, then, that religion and virtue are something more than *mere names*; and that there is in them an intrinsic excellence, which does not arise from men's mere opinion, but is founded in the very constitution and laws of nature. These laws of nature, moreover, affect men simply *as men*, irrespective of their being social creatures.

¹ Hence the Roman laws of the Twelve Tables threaten those sins which the eye of man could not detect, with punishment from the gods: “*Divos castè adeunto, pietate adhibento; qui secùs faxit, Deus ipse vindex erit.*” Cic. de Leg. ii. 8.

But man is framed for *society*, and his character could not fully develope itself in a state of solitude; and hence springs a necessity for politic societies, and for a consequent *political law*, by which they may be governed; of a different kind from the natural law, which has already been discussed.

Now laws politic, or the regulations by which only a commonwealth can be held together, must be framed on the presumption that man is a *depraved* character, and averse in his nature to all that is good. Unless their provisions are calculated to coerce him in that respect, they are not perfect, and will be inefficient for the common good; and hence we must investigate how laws may be framed to regulate our fallen nature in a good and right course.

All men desire a happy life; and that is the most happy wherein virtue is exercised with the least interruption. Now the first requisite in life is *the means of subsistence*; for even to live virtuously is impossible, except we *do* live; hence the first impediment to happiness is penury, and want of necessaries of life; and the removal of it by a *competency* becomes a primary object. Absolute necessaries being obtained, there seems naturally to arise a further desire for what may contribute to the *comforts* and satisfactions of life: and hence spring mechanical arts and inventions. But in the midst of this desire, there nevertheless exists a

natural admiration of what is religious, virtuous, and wise, as being superior in itself to mere sensible gratifications. This mental and moral wealth, (if it may be so termed,) however, is no more *born* with us than natural riches, and must be the result of gradual acquisition, in which we may be materially assisted by the experience and help of others, and by being permitted to follow our pursuits in peace and quietude.

But men's powers, either of wit or valour, may be used for *evil*, as well as good; of which there is too lamentable proof in the world's history. And to secure, therefore, such an orderly state of things as is necessary for happiness, there must be some sort of *general compact* entered into, wherein by common consent a power of government, for a restraint of the evil and defence of the good, might be vested in some individuals, to be directors and judges over the rest. Fathers, by the voice of nature, have the rule over their own families, and are, as it were, kings in their own household; but public Magistrates appointed to rule over multitudes, can only be invested with their power originally by the *common consent* of those governed; unless, indeed, they receive an appointment from that God to whom the whole world is subject. When first invested with this public authority, their magisterial office most probably was of the *regal* kind: as heads of families were a sort of kings and priests in

their household, so the heads of whole nations were the kings thereof, and not improbably exercised *priestly* functions also ¹.

Other modes of government arose out of various circumstances; but whatever kinds there may have been, all seem evidently to have had their origin in some sort of general compact and agreement, such as has been mentioned, and to have been rendered necessary by the corruption of our nature. When, however, experience had taught men that absolute power given unto a single individual, or even to a few, did, from the evil propensities of our nature, lead to evil and tyranny; then *Laws* were found necessary for the *common good* of all, for the guidance of governors, and for the information of the governed in the matter of their duties, and their protection against the caprice of their rulers.

Now laws may be divided into *natural* and *positive*. Natural law is that which bindeth universally; *e. g.* that "theft deserveth punishment." But Positive laws are those which, being constituted by the opinion and discretion of men, have not so universal a force; *e. g.* "the *kind* of punishment with which particular thefts may be visited."

¹ Hence we read in Scripture of Melchisedec being king and priest, (Heb. vii. 1;) and hence the name of *fathers* being given to kings, those who originally exercised rule being fathers of families, or *patriarchs*.

Positive laws, therefore, as they put a constraint upon men to conform themselves to certain regulations, sometimes irksome and unpleasant, should be framed by those who have a character for wisdom, in order to ensure the more respectful and ready obedience of the governed. They do not receive their constraining force, indeed, from the talents of their framers, but from the power that gave them the strength of laws. What applied to the appointment of governors, here applies to the formation of laws; as in the one case the common consent established a king, and invested him with authority; so the same sort of public approval appoints framers of laws, and gives their edicts a constraining power. This approval is not necessary to be given *personally*, but it may be done by representatives or agents (in councils or parliaments for instance) as effectually and as bindingly as if by our own expressed consent.

And, indeed, our assent is *virtually* given on many occasions, when it is not done so actually; *e. g.* when we keep an established law of our country, to which our consent was never asked, or which was passed before we were born. For the laws of society continue in force upon the successors, in each generation, as strongly as upon their predecessors, by whom they were actually established; and we of the present day were *fœderally* represented by our forefathers. Hence

human laws, of whatever kind, are available by common consent, and bind in succeeding times.

Positive laws may be divided into what are *mixed*, and what are *merely human*. Mixed law is that which, being founded in reason, hath also a positive enactment to enforce its observance; so that what men were bound to, in *foro conscientiæ*, they are now constrained to observe through the penalties of human law. As for the laws *merely human*, they are such as order things abstractedly *indifferent* in themselves; *e. g.* as the laws of succession and inheritance, which differ in different societies of people. And hence we see the reason why laws merely human are not every where exactly alike; different local circumstances causing different¹, and sometimes opposite, enactments.

But besides the law which concerns men, as *men*, and that which binds them as *social* beings, there is a third, which regulateth the intercourse of one *nation* or body politic with another; and this is styled the “law of nations.” For the same social feeling which prompts us to unite nationally, also leads us to desire a sort of *universal* fellowship with other nations. And here again conventional laws are necessary to regulate

¹ Lands are by human law divided, for instance, in some places amongst all the deceased proprietor's children, in others they go to his eldest son.

the conduct of fallen man in this sort of intercourse; as well with reference to peaceful visits, as also in regard to the usage of arms and practices of war; and no nation is at liberty to weaken or violate them by any peculiar regulations of their own, any more than any individual is at liberty to break the laws of his own commonwealth, merely in consequence of his own peculiar views.

And herein especially *Christian* nations have peculiar laws obligatory upon them *as such*. Hence the singular benefit of General Councils appears; both to regulate the spiritual intercourse between nations, and also to preserve that unity so desirable amongst the Churches of Christ, which have all “one faith, one Lord, one baptism.” Such Councils were of Divine origin¹, of Apostolic practice, and every way calculated to preserve uniformity of doctrine and discipline. And though *abuses* did arise out of them subsequently, from men’s evil passions, yet this is no valid argument against them abstractedly; nor yet against their revival, freed from the blemishes they had formerly contracted: inasmuch as they might be the happy means of removing many scandalous stumbling-blocks arising from party strifes, and of leading men also to a closer following of heavenly precepts and Christian

¹ Acts xv. 28.

charity, and settling them in firm and steady principles of faith.

The subject, therefore, now leadeth us to another consideration, viz. the laws which God hath in Scripture revealed for the guidance of men's actions.

XI. *Why God hath revealed SUPERNATURAL LAWS for Man's guidance.*

It having already been shown that all things (God only excepted) may receive some *addition* of good from other external objects, even of the lowest degree, we may now remark that the *perfection* of bliss to which our nature may attain is termed our "sovereign good;" and is such, as being once attained unto, leaves nothing further to be desired. Now objects of desire are various; some are sought, riches for instance, as being simply *aids* towards obtaining others; some, as health and knowledge, for their own sakes: yet these do not constitute that perfection wherein the soul can so absolutely rest, as not to aspire after something further. To these aspirations, however, there must be some limit, some ultimate object to be desired simply *for itself*, and beyond and beside which there is nothing to wish for: and as for such a good, our desires must be infinite¹; the good itself must neces-

¹ Every good is desirable in proportion to its value; therefore that which is supreme and incomparably excellent must be incomparably desired, *i. e.* infinitely.

sarily be infinite, *i. e.* must be GOD, who is, therefore, the supreme object of our felicity.

Moreover a desire for an object tendeth to union therewith; and as the simple possession of it cannot confer happiness apart from the enjoyment thereof, hence we can only be *perfectly* happy when being united to God, we enjoy Him as an object wherein our souls are satisfied with everlasting delight. *This is happiness*, wherein we fully possess and enjoy that which is desirable simply for itself, and which contains the perfect contentation of all our wishes.

Of this happiness, however, we are not capable in *this life*; our imperfections both of mind and body (whereby our very pursuit of good must be impeded and interrupted) prevent that complete union and devotion of every faculty of the soul to God wherein it consists. Of such union and devotion, however, our souls will be capable; and when attained unto, then shall we love good purely for itself, and through the gracious goodness of God that love and fruition of perfect good shall be *perpetual*.

Now the fact that *all* men desire happiness, shows that the desire is a *natural* one; and as natural desires are implanted by God, they cannot be utterly frustrate¹; hence the object of such desire must be attainable. But as it is evident that neither the attainment

¹ It is absurd to suppose that God would implant a desire in the hearts of *all* for what is absolutely unattainable.

of *sensual* perfection, including all things appertaining to the support and comfort of animal life; nor of moral and *intellectual*, as comprising virtue and knowledge; can absolutely satisfy the soul, so as that it doth not aspire and long after something further,—something which, though it cannot fully comprehend, it can yet conceive of and imagine: this natural desire of the soul, therefore, does of itself proclaim that *there* is an attainable perfection, superior either to sensual or intellectual,—*i. e.* a *divine* or spiritual perfection, such as hath been just before described.

This perfection of happiness hath been revealed to us, and is set forth in the nature of a *reward*. Now rewards always pre-suppose the performance of rewardable duties, and generally include a sort of *proportionate* arrangement between the duty and its recompense; and our *works*, therefore, are the only natural means of attaining unto blessedness.

But, admitting the consideration that the excellence of the reward on the part of God infinitely overpays and exceeds all the merit of even a perfect performance of duty on the side of man; since it is manifest that no man living either does or can perfectly fulfil the law of God; and that so far from it, every one is a transgressor thereof, and all flesh is thus guilty before God, and liable to the eternal punishment denounced for

its violation : there remaineth clearly, therefore, either *no* salvation for him, or such a one as was utterly beyond his imagination to conceive, and which *only* could be known by revelation from God Himself. And this supernatural way, this *mystery* of salvation, God hath been pleased to reveal; even redemption from the condemning power of sin, through the merits and death of a mighty Saviour, who is “the Way” that leadeth from misery unto life eternal: a way grounded upon the guiltiness of sin, and consequent condemnation and death through sin; and on man’s utter inability to save himself by his own deeds. Instead of man’s work, it is the “work of God;” and “this is the work of God, *that ye believe in Him*, whom He hath sent¹.” Not indeed that a naked belief of itself will save, but that without belief, all things else are as nothing.

This belief or *Faith*, coupled with the exercise of *Hope* and *Charity*, whereby we implicitly receive as absolute truth all the declarations of God, look forward confidently to the consummation of glory, and have our hearts knit to Him in love, was only made known as the essential condition of salvation, by supernatural communication from God; and therefore all laws connected therewith are necessarily (both as to the mode

¹ John vi. 29.

of their delivery and the matter whereof they treat) *supernatural*.

XII. *Why many NATURAL or RATIONAL laws are in Scripture.*

BUT though the supernatural law requireth duties of its *own kind*, yet natural duties are not excluded therefrom. Hence the law of God is fraught with laws of nature also; as well for the more ready discovery of those things which by the natural process would be difficult, as also for our confirmation in those that are obvious, by the super-added sanction of God's authority. Moreover, the corruption of our nature is prone, in respect of our individual sinful propensities, to palliate, and sometimes even approve them; so that human laws could not possibly reach to the conviction of them, except the Law of God, "sharp as a two-edged sword," came in to its support, and laid those things open and clear, which else had been buried in moral darkness to the ruin of immortal souls.

It is manifest, therefore, that our "Sovereign good" is desired *naturally*; that God hath appointed natural *means* of attaining it; that man having utterly *disabled* himself for those means, hath had *other* methods revealed unto him by God, who hath given him a law to teach him how that which is desired naturally must be obtained supernaturally: and that along with such

supernatural duties as could not be known by the light of nature, the same law teaches them such natural duties also, as could not otherwise easily be known.

XIII. *The benefit of having Divine Laws* WRITTEN.

Laws thus supernaturally revealed were, in primitive ages of men, *orally* communicated; and though the lengthened period of human life rendered Divine traditions less liable to corruption, yet we find even then that they were frequently re-iterated, in order to preserve them in their purity. When man's days were shortened, *written* records of the Divine will were necessary; and Moses, therefore, under God's special direction, "wrote all the words of God¹." Hence this singular benefit arises, that although God's revealed will, under any mode of communication, demands our submissive acquiescence; yet thus possessing the will of God, pure and uncorrupt, recorded in Sacred Scripture, we can confidently appeal to it as our safe and only guide; a blessing we shall value the more highly on considering the uncertainty of *tradition*, and how Truth itself hath been deformed thereby; and on looking also at the miserable corruptions which such portions of things Divine have suffered, as have been spread amongst the heathens, and been mixed up with their vain mythologies. What would the con-

¹ Exod. xxiv. 4.

dition of our Church have been *now*, had we only the uncertain traditions of predecessors to support us?

And though the Scripture may contain not only all things in point of doctrine and duty absolutely necessary for man's salvation, but sundry other precepts whereof haply we might be ignorant and yet be saved; yet nothing therein is *superfluous*; all is beneficial, and contributeth to man's edification and happiness, just as the various parts of man's body are necessary to his comfort, though he might lose many of them, without prejudice to his essential existence.

XIV. *The SUFFICIENCY of Scripture for its object.*

WHEN, however, Scripture is said to contain all things necessary to salvation, it must be understood with a certain degree of limitation, and not be taken in its widest and most absolute sense. Thus, therefore, when the inquiry is, "What books are we to consider *Scripture*?" the Scripture cannot in this sense prove itself. Hence such knowledge, on our part, as to the authenticity of Scripture, is pre-supposed, as may be attained by other methods¹. Being then persuaded by these other means, that the Scriptures are the oracles of God, then they themselves do teach us

¹ Even as it is in other sciences; just as instruction in eloquence, for instance, pre-supposeth the learner to have a previous acquaintance with the principles and rules of grammar.

the rest, and lay before us all things necessary for salvation.

Now many truths are contained in Scripture, not so much by express words, as by deduction or *comprehension*; *e. g.* the doctrine of the Trinity, the co-eternity of Christ with God, the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, and infant-baptism; all which, though not *literally* set down, are yet clearly implied. Yet this mode must not be pushed too far, nor pursued after every conjectural surmise of man's ingenuity, but soberly and discreetly, avoiding all useless disquisitions.

As then a revelation from God was required, to acquaint man with that, which, being undiscoverable naturally, was yet necessary for salvation; God, therefore, hath supernaturally revealed the way of Life so far as is sufficient. And this has been done both *orally*, and also more particularly by *writing*; which latter mode hath this advantage, that it is not so liable to corruption as oral tradition; and as each book of the Holy Scripture accords to the exigence under which it was written, it may contain not only supernatural truths, but also those which are purely natural or historical. And the very fact of the *ceasing* of further revelation since the publication of the Gospel, is a manifest token that it is sufficient, and that nothing further is necessary to salvation.

Now both the Old Testament and the New have the single object of *salvation* in view; the former teaching its attainment through a Saviour which *should* come, the latter through that Saviour, Christ, which *hath* come; and that *Jesus* whom the Jews did crucify, and whom God did raise again from the dead, is HE. As, however, the two Testaments, Old and New, thus harmonize with each other; and yet the Apostle, though speaking of the Old Testament Scripture as being able to make “men wise unto salvation¹,” did not mean that the Old *alone* could do this for those under the Gospel dispensation, but that it must be conjoined with “faith in Christ:” so when the entire body of Holy Scripture is asserted as being sufficient for salvation, it is not meant that the light of nature is necessarily excluded; but that the latter is so aided and perfected by the light divine, as to be complete for our everlasting felicity.

When, however, some allege the divine authority of *Traditions*, we do not maintain that any thing from God is to be rejected simply because it is not in Scripture; for His commands, in any form, are to be obeyed. But oral traditions must be *proved* to be of God, in order to have the same validity as His written word. Indeed, rites and customs instituted by the Apostles, though not written, are still retained in our Church;

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 15.

for it is not the *mode* of delivery, but the *Author* whence they proceed, that gives both the Scriptures and the rites their force.

XV. *Of the POSITIVE Laws in Scripture ; the mutability of some of them ; and the general use of Scripture.*

Now Laws are imposed either, 1st, by each man upon himself, as in promises to man, or in vows to God ; or, 2nd, by Society upon its individual members ; or, 3rd, by Nations upon societies ; or, lastly, by God upon any or every of these ; *e. g.* His laws to the Israelites : and they all severally comprehend both *natural* and *positive* laws. Natural laws are *always* binding ; but positive ones are mutable or not, according to circumstances, whether they be imposed by God or man ; for it is a mistake to suppose that positive laws are only such as *men* establish¹.

For, indeed, laws concerning supernatural duties (*i. e.* duties which we could not discover by the light of nature) are all *positive*, and concern men supernaturally, *as men* ; or, supernaturally, *as a society*, called the Church. In the former instance the duties are styled supernatural, inasmuch as though belonging to *all*, yet they are subjects of Revelation, and specially appointed by God ; in the latter, inasmuch as the

¹ Hence the Ceremonial Law of the Israelites was a positive law, *mutable* when God ordered it to be changed.

Church is a special society differing from the natural society between men, in the circumstance of the union being between God, angels, and saints. Supernatural duties are those which (over and above the usual rules of all politic societies) God Himself hath revealed concerning His appointed mode of worship; and which, therefore, must not be subject to man's device, but must flow from and be constituted by Him alone.

Hence all Divine Laws, belonging naturally or supernaturally either to men as men, or as members of politic society, or of Church society, are as immutable (abstractedly considered) as their unchangeable Author¹. But Laws instituted by God, for *particular* periods or circumstances, either of societies or Churches, are *mutable* according to those circumstances. And hence the way of salvation by Christ is styled "an Eternal Gospel²," because its requirements will continue as long as the world lasteth; whereas the Levitical rites and ceremonies being for a temporary object, were abolished when that was answered.

With reference, then, to the origin of all other Laws, as likewise of those of Scripture, given by Him who confessedly can neither err nor deceive: although in matters obvious to common sense it would seem

¹ Even *positive* ones are so, except He change them.

² Rev. xiv. 6.

superfluous to search for higher authority; yet herein, after all, it is better to be superstitious, so as to consult the Scripture in small matters, than to be profane, neglecting and caring nothing at all about God's laws even in mightier concerns. Did the very heathens account so much of their gods, which in truth were no gods, and shall we neglect the oracles of the true and living God, given to His Church, and accessible to all? Rather, since He hath endowed us with sense for our natural necessities; with reason, for higher matters both of time and futurity; and hath given a revelation, still further to disclose what was necessary for the attainment of eternal good; let us use His precious gifts, searching what the will of God is, in order to our faithful performance of it.

XVI. Conclusion : showing how all the foregoing points bear upon the present enquiry.

THUS have been exhibited the nature and force of various kinds of Laws: the law which God hath appointed for *Himself* in his works; and that which He hath made for His *creatures*; the law of natural and *necessary agents*; the law which *angels* obey; the law whereunto *reason* binds men *as men*; that which guides them as forming *politic societies*; that belonging to *nations*; and that which concerns the fellowship of *all*: and, finally, the law which God hath *super-*

naturally revealed. And the object of this is, by tracing the origin of good and reasonable laws up to their great source, the Father of lights, to show their great importance and efficacy; and also to afford a method of reducing such laws as are controverted, to their original causes, with a view to ascertain whether they be reasonable and just. And as nothing can be thoroughly understood till its first principles be investigated and known, so an inquiry into Ecclesiastical Law seems properly preceded by an exposition of *Laws in general*, inasmuch as it has more or less a connection in principles or operation with them all.

It requires a sound judgment to determine correctly about any law; and if we undertake to examine those under which we live, it would be well to do so under a serious impression on our minds of that Eternal Law, whose benefits are so manifest, and of which all obviously good and righteous laws are but the *copies* as it were, albeit men may not *designedly* have framed them therefrom. And in those laws which do not appear so obviously good, we should yet exercise a reserve and caution before we pronounce against them, lest we should, through ignorance, be found, after all, as dishonouring Him to whom we owe all submission. Contumelious invectives indeed against laws generally arise from an ignorance how laws inferior are derived from that Supreme Law of all.

For even the Natural Law, whereby necessary agents are influenced, is not, as some imagine, entirely unconnected with the reasonable and even the supernatural law, whereby the moral and spiritual conduct of men is guided; the rule of Christ's love towards His church (whereon our salvation depends) is compared by the Apostle to the natural love which every being entertains for "his own flesh, which he doth love and cherish¹;" showing that the axioms of the law natural are applicable to that which is moral and spiritual. And, moreover, the rule for the actions of angels seems to have a connection with our own. They are styled in Scripture as being "fellow-servants²;" and are represented as having interest and joy in the affairs and prosperity of the Church³.

Now as men's operations are diverse, being natural, rational, supernatural, politic, and ecclesiastical, so, to avoid confusion, each must be estimated by its own proper law; and hence arises the error of those who imagine that although God is confessedly to be glorified by the conformity of men's actions to His law, yet that such law is *only* the Scripture. Whereas, even in our character of *natural* agents, we glorify the law of God insensibly as it were⁴; and as *reasonable* beings we glorify Him still further, acting not from a

¹ Eph. v. 29.

² Rev. xix. 10.

³ 1 Pet. i. 12. Eph. iii. 10.

⁴ Ps. cxlviii. 7, 8, 9.

scripture law, but according to the law *impressed in our hearts*¹: only it requireth a *revealed* law to direct us fully how to honour Him as we entirely ought. So that in *moral* actions, the revealed law *aideth* that of reason; whereas in *supernatural* duties, it is the *only* guide.

But when men are united in *societies*, whether civil or spiritual, there is evidently a necessity for a still *further* law, to guide them in their social capacity: and it must be binding upon all, unless it enjoin ought contrary to the law of reason or of God. Hence the scriptural injunction, “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers²;” for otherwise all social life must be destroyed.

For want of considering this, men, individually good, are often socially bad; from a peculiarity of temper they are slow to perceive, and still more so to admit, the force which the several kinds of law ought to have over them, they set up their own opinions as the test of right action; and by following the law of private reason instead of the law of public institution, they breed disturbances, and especially in the Church of Christ.

To illustrate this. In the article of food, nothing more is required than natural instinct for its selection and use. And yet in our rational capacity, moderation

¹ Rom. i. 21.

² Rom. xiii. 1.

in its use, and praise to God for its bestowal, is the law of reason. Moreover, to some sorts of food, a religious and holy character hath been given by supernatural law, as to the Paschal Lamb of the Jews, and the Eucharist of Christians.

Again, politic society has fixed laws as to food, which, as living in society, we are bound to observe: and likewise in the Church, certain regulations (as fastings, &c.) have been instituted, to which our private discretion must bend, unless we would be the authors of confusion. And just in the same manner one individual Church must bow to the regulations of the Churches in general; as in the direction given to “abstain from things strangled and from blood¹,” in order that the fellowship and unity of Christian Churches may be maintained.

Hence, briefly to conclude: “of LAW there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world: all things in heaven and earth do her homage,—the very least, as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever; though *each* in a different sort and manner, yet *all* with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.”

¹ Acts xv. 20.

BOOK II.

CONCERNING THE POSITION HELD BY THOSE WHO URGE REFORMATION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, THAT "SCRIPTURE IS THE ONLY RULE OF ALL THINGS WHICH MAY BE DONE BY MEN IN THIS LIFE."

I. *An Answer to the First objection, as supported by an alleged proof from Scripture in Prov. ii. 9.*

THE object of this treatise being a consideration of Ecclesiastical Law, and not a defence of any abuses or corruptions, for which those that introduce and uphold them will be awfully responsible; it is now proposed to examine the entire form of our Church Polity, and to investigate what mistaken people, as we think them, endeavour to overthrow, through a false conceit that what they would substitute is grounded on Divine authority. Neither are the points thus presented for investigation so numerous as would at first sight appear.

Now to examine the *sources* of error seems the best way to extirpate them. And one of the first that

meets us, as held by the opponents of our Church Polity, is an overstraining of the necessary use of God's Word. For, whereas He hath ordained sundry kinds of laws whereby to rule the diverse actions of men, yet they hold "that one only law, the Scripture, must be the rule to direct us in all things;" even so far as to "the taking up of a rush or straw." Two reasonable considerations would at once explode this: first, to restrain their views to *moral* actions, or such as have in them virtue or vice; secondly, not to demand warrant of Scripture for every action, but, provided it be conformed to the law of *reason*, to let that suffice; inasmuch as from the connection between the law of reason and of Scripture such actions may be proved proper, although it might be done only by a long deduction unsuited to the purposes of ordinary life. From the exclusive use of Scripture as a *sole* rule of life we dissent, and shall proceed to investigate the point.

In all parts of knowledge properly so called, things *most general* are *most strong*, because our credence of particulars depends upon the credibility of the generalities from whence they spring. Hence they who claim the general assent of mankind to their doctrines, and are severe on those who differ from them, ought to see that their own premises at least are sound.

Now, in looking into the arguments of those who

object to our Church government, their chief and primary position seems to be this, "That the Scripture of God is in such sort the rule of human actions, that simply whatsoever we do, and are not by it directed thereunto, is sin:" in other words, that Scripture is exclusively, and in every particular, the absolute rule of human life.

In proof of this, they allege "that Wisdom doth teach men every good way¹;" and hence that nothing can be good unless Scripture specifically direct it. Now herein they manifestly err, in limiting all knowledge to the teaching of scripture-wisdom; for in that case there is no way of well doing, nay even no art or science, but Scripture should teach it. Whereas, since there are various actions, by the well-doing of which we may show ourselves to be wise, so there are sundry methods by which Wisdom imparts her stores unto man. Some things she openeth indeed by the books of Scripture; but others from the glorious works of Nature: some she inspires by spiritual influence; others she communiceth by the process of experience and practice.

II. *An Answer to the Second objection, as supported by an alleged proof from Scripture, in 1 Cor. x. 31.*

THE second position they put forth is, "That all

¹ Prov. ii. 9.

things be done to the glory of God¹ ;” and hence that every action should specifically be directed to that end. Now, strictly speaking, God’s glory is incapable of increase at the hands of man ; and hence the phrase “being glorified” can only mean, that we testify our acknowledgment of His glory : and this we effectually do by a *general course of obedience*. In one sense, indeed, we glorify Him in every right action, natural as well as moral and spiritual ; inasmuch as all the instincts of nature proceed from Him, and manifest His power : but it does not follow that we *sin* as oft as we do any thing without an *express intention* thereby to glorify God ; or that we should not move, or sleep, or satisfy any natural desire, without especial reference to Him.

Indeed, as has already been shown (Book I.)², there are *other* kinds of laws notifying the will of God besides those of Scripture, by our obedience to which we may testify His glory. And hence, as when the Apostle says, “I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved,” we are not to infer that he did not move hand or foot except with an express view to their salvation : so, on the other hand, we conclude that when we do any thing disobediently to God, or offensively against the good of men, whose benefit we ought to seek, even as our own, then we *glorify Him not*.

¹ 1 Cor. x. 31.

² See p. 37.

In fact, St. Peter's direction to the Christian converts to act so, that the "Gentiles, seeing their good works, might glorify God," shows this; inasmuch as the Gentiles, being without Scripture knowledge, might, notwithstanding, be right judges of Christian men's actions, and thereby testify God's glory.

III. *An Answer to the Third objection, as supported by an alleged proof from Scripture, in 1 Tim. iv. 5.*

THE third position they maintain is, "That meats and drinks are sanctified by the word of God and by prayer;" and hence, that in all things whatsoever which we have given to us, we must needs sin in the use thereof, unless we have the special appointment of Scripture thereunto. Whereas the Apostle's meaning in the passage quoted is simply, that the Gospel, by removing the legal distinctions as to clean meats and unclean, did sanctify *generally* unto all men what each must sanctify to himself by a reverend, grateful, and proper use.

IV. *An Answer to the Fourth objection, as supported by an alleged proof from Scripture, in Rom. xiv. 23.*

BUT the fourth and chief position on which they take their stand is, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" and hence, that as faith exists not but in refer-

ence to the Word of God, therefore whatsoever is not done by the word of God is sin.

Now, though in strict speech, faith has only reference to Scripture, yet there are manifestly other grounds of credence besides this. The Saviour's words, "Though ye believe not me, believe my works;" and Thomas's answer, that "except he saw the print of the nails he would not believe;" show that we may be said to believe not only what we know by the relation of another, but also what we are assured of by our own reason and sense.

And inasmuch as the objectors allow that St. Paul, by the word *faith* (as above quoted), means only "a full persuasion that that which we do is well done," hence their position may be fairly questioned. For might not the Jews have *done well* in believing Christ's divine mission simply on the ground of His works? And did not Thomas *do well* in believing fully that Christ's actual body was raised, though his belief was grounded on the evidence of his *senses*? Besides, we all incontrovertibly *do well* in believing the Scripture to be from God; and yet, evidently, it is not Scripture that gives us this assurance; or, in other words, (as has already been remarked,) Scripture cannot in this respect prove itself and accredit its own authenticity.

And here the argument might rest. But the ob-

jectors urge again, “That wheresoever faith is wanting, there is sin; and in every action *not commanded*, faith is wanting; therefore in every action not commanded there is sin.” To this it may be replied, that as the nature of things *indifferent* is neither to be commanded nor forbidden, but to be left *free*; so at least this their position must have an addition made to it, and it must stand thus “in every action not commanded of God, *or permitted* with approbation, faith is wanting.”

For it is manifest that some things are permitted or left to our choice; *e. g.* food and clothing are necessary and enjoined, but the sorts and fashions thereof are left *free*; unto the Jew all meats were indifferent, except some particular sorts prohibited: and St. Paul, illustrating Gentile Christian liberty in this particular, says, “All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient;” implying a choice left to his own discretion even in indifferent things. And, indeed, it is self-evident that what God neither prohibits nor commands, He permits with approbation, either to be done or left undone, chosen or not chosen.

Now some things being thus admitted to be *indifferent*, the objectors even here urge that in our selection of any in preference to the rest, “the word of Christ is *only* able, through faith, to give us assurance and resolution.” This is a pure assertion, incapable

of proof. Indeed, were the Scripture so to direct, the things would no longer be indifferent, but commanded; being, however, indifferent, man's sound discretion enables him to select; and even by the exercise of that discretion, God is in some sense glorified, inasmuch as it is a proper use of the faculty wherewith He has blessed us.

Moreover, this position of the objectors is one, if true, that is of *perpetual* force; and then recurring to the primitive times of the world, we find that Seth, Noah, Abraham, and others, who lived before a syllable of Scripture was given, were in some specific actions indeed admonished by God in supernatural communications; but yet in all other actions of an ordinary kind, wherein they were not so directed, they did, according to this position, actually and constantly sin: a thing too absurd to discuss.

Neither, again, can it be urged, that "although it was different *before* Scripture was delivered, yet after it was given, then the case was altered; and that unless every thing be brought to the test and direction of Scripture *now*, it is sin;" for this would be to assert that Scripture quenches, as it were, all the light of nature; an assertion which the Prophets and Apostles themselves contradict, by using natural arguments in corroboration or illustration of Scripture. The safest direction herein seems to be that of Augustine, who

would credit nothing unless confirmed by the Scriptures, or by some reason not contrary to them."

V. An Answer to alleged Proofs out of the Fathers, who dispute NEGATIVELY from Holy Scriptures.

IN order, however, to support their positions, they urge the practice of the Fathers, in using *negative* arguments from Scripture against what is evil; *e. g.* "Scriptures teach it not, avoid it therefore." And hence they draw conversely the positive argument, "that whatsoever we may lawfully do, Scripture must teach it."

Now no force of any negative argument is so great as to prove that all things whatsoever which Scripture affirmeth not, or prescribeth not, are sinful. Indeed, on looking into the works of the Fathers, we shall find them speaking as strongly in matters of *opinion* as they do of *action*; *e. g.* "Of what thing soever," says St. Augustine, "the question be, I say not if we, but if an angel from heaven, shall tell us any thing beside that you have received in Scripture under the Law and the Gospel, let him be accursed." Again St. Jerome, "We believe it not, because we read it not." Nay, St. Hilary even saith, "We ought not so much as to *know* the things which the Book of the Law containeth not." Is it then fairly to be deduced from these, and similar statements, that all knowledge of

arts and sciences, except what may be learned in Holy Scripture, is to be condemned? This would be, indeed, an extravagant wresting of their words and meaning. What they manifestly intend to convey is this, “That to urge any thing for our *religious Christian belief*, and to require the same assent thereto, as that wherewith the words of inspiration are received, and not to show it in Scripture, is utterly unlawful and execrable.”

Under this limited interpretation, it is evident that their words must be taken, as to matters of doctrine; and if in doctrine, so, by consequence, as to matters of action and practice also. Neither is there any passage in the Ancient Fathers, which they allege ¹ in support of their position, but which, when examined with its context and general scope, evidently fails to bear them out in their assertion. Nay, Tertullian himself even argues that many things are necessary from Christian custom, although no Scripture be found to require them ².

VI. *An Answer to alleged proofs from* NEGATIVE *arguments in Scripture.*

It is, however, still further alleged, that in the

¹ Particularly from Tertullian.

² Reckoning up observances to be followed, Tertullian says, “*Harum et aliarum ejusmodi disciplinarum, si Scripturarum legem expostules, nullam invenies.*” Cap. 4.

Scriptures themselves we have arguments from Divine authority for negative as well as positive reasoning ; as “ He *hath* commanded, and therefore it must be ;” and again, “ He hath *not*, and therefore it must not be.” But though this may be, and is at once admitted ; yea, and though from His perfections every thing proceeding from Him, even negatively argued, is most strong and cogent ; yet in this case negative arguments can only be so allowed, on condition that the scope and meaning of the whole passage, with its context, be taken into consideration.

Thus in the passage, “ Woe to those rebellious children,” saith the Lord, “ which walk forth to go down into Egypt, and have not asked counsel at my mouth, to strengthen themselves with the strength of Pharaoh ¹ :” — and again, when Joshua’s league with the Gibeonites was blamed, because he “ sought not counsel at the mouth of the Lord ² :” — in these matters we must consider that the negative argument applies solely because of the peculiar position of the Jews with God. They were His chosen people ; and in all difficult cases had extraordinary direction from Him ; and hence, when they presumed to act from their own opinion, as to whether aid should be sought from the Egyptians, without consulting God, although that special case might not have been mentioned, they

¹ Is. xxx. 1, 2.

² Joshua ix. 14.

did wrong; and precisely so in the matter of the Gibeonites.

The question, however, is, *not* whether the Israelites, peculiarly situated, did wrong at any time in acting from their own minds without Scripture direction, or express counsel from God; but whether *all* things done by others, under other circumstances, be sin, unless done by the direction of Scripture: and this is an utterly untenable position whenever the whole Scripture meaning is investigated.

Thus, then, though in some cases, as has already been admitted, and as some of the Fathers, and also of the ornaments of our own times¹ have asserted, a negative argument from Scripture may be, and is very cogent in certain cases, yet it by no means follows that it is thus forcible and applicable in all general cases whatever; but much the contrary.

VII. *An Examination into the opinion of objectors respecting the force of HUMAN AUTHORITY.*

BUT the objectors are thus anxious to weaken the force of human authority, and to bring all things whatever to the determination of Scripture, for the obvious purpose of thereby overthrowing the Laws

¹ Bishop Jewel particularly is adverted to here, who, in a controversy with Harding, showed that negative arguments, whereat the latter utterly scoffed, might, nevertheless, be good and sound under certain circumstances.

and Constitutions of our Church. Their assertion, “that man’s authority avails neither affirmatively nor negatively,” is untrue. For the weightiest affairs in the course of life often depend upon human affirmation; and even the Law of God saith, “in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established¹.” And not only so as to matters of *fact*, but likewise in matters of opinion and judgment, human testimony is of weight, wherein the sentences of wise and experienced men are much esteemed; so that the opinion of one acknowledged man of understanding may sway even whole nations. Nor yet is it that the simpler sort merely are thus moved; but the wise and learned are constantly seen more readily bowing to the opinion of others, whose superior talents they can the more readily discern and appreciate. Indeed, human authority can give weight even to negative arguments; as in the matter of history, for instance: for whereas the records only mention six kings of England bearing the name of Edward, therefore we at once assert there were no more.

Nor yet can man’s infirmity be pleaded as a bar to human authority. For though he be beset with ignorance and error often, yet this does not invalidate his testimony in all things. In fact all history, sacred

¹ Deut. xix. 15. Matt. xviii. 16.

and profane, receives its credit with us upon human testimony. The Scripture, for instance, could not teach us the things that are of God, unless we credit the men who have taught us that the words of Scripture itself do signify those things.

Albeit, from such arguments as these, it is shown that human authority avails in matters of history or art and science; yet it is denied to be valid in all "affairs divine," in matters of "faith and religion." But here it is presumed, that if because of their judgment and experience, some men's opinion may seem weighty to others who have not the same advantages natural or acquired; even so the same sort of judgment, diligently exercised in the study of Scripture, and aided by God's grace, may fairly be allowed to give a force to their grave and deliberate opinions on religious matters.

There is a sort of innate desire for a solid foundation of credence in all things, which prompts us to seek every mode of certainty we can; so that if ocular proof, or reasonable demonstration, be not attainable, then we incline even to what is most probable. Now Scripture, being the Word of God, is super-eminent herein, and at once weightier with us than even ocular or demonstrative proof. But our assent even to Scripture is only demanded in proportion to the evidence it specifically contains; *e. g.* in reference to the *time* of

the fall of angels and of man, and other matters, (Scripture not positively declaring,) our judgments may be in suspense, and incline various ways; and men's consciences are only best settled, when they have possessed themselves of the best grounds of credence that are attainable.

Though the weight of human judgments even in religious matters, may thus be to a certain extent cogent, yet it is only so in absence of that highest of all, Scripture proof; so that the judgment of ten thousand fallible Councils could not controvert one single demonstration from God's infallible Word. But where this is wanting, then the opinion of learned, serious, and pious divines must necessarily weigh with us, even in cases where they have not set down all the processes of reasoning whereby they arrived at their conclusions.

It is sometimes asserted, that human authority ought not to prevail, especially at least "with the Church, and those that are called and persuaded of the authority of God's word." Now with them it ought evidently to have weight also, as with others, in a proportionable degree, provided it urge nothing contrary to reason or sound sense. The Fathers themselves have never disowned the opinion, that learned men's judgments are of weight in opening the truth and explicating Scripture. Indeed, the contrary practice

with some, of considering all human authority in matters divine as of nothing worth, has led the foolish and headstrong into desperate errors, and may be the very bane of Christian religion.

Our Saviour also seemed to countenance human authority when his disciples put the question, "Why say the Scribes that Elias must first come?" They well knew that the Scribes did err on many points; but, nevertheless, they thought that their erroneous opinion simply on this point, though even appearing to contradict His word of truth, was of some weight: and in His reply He did not reprove them for their deference to human opinion.

Indeed the very practice of the objectors themselves invalidates their own position. For when judgments of learned men are pleaded against them, they at once array on their own side the opinions of others whom they allege to be as learned; or they apply epithets of respect and honour to such as may not be already celebrated; which circumstances at once show their ingrafted persuasion of the cogency of human authority, even whilst they are arguing against it.

In fact their very Scripture-arguments themselves often disprove their position. If the Scripture be positive and express, then indeed no further argument remains. But if, as in very many instances is the case, the conclusion they arrive at is only an infe-

rential and conjectural one, then they clearly at once take their ground upon human authority, even in matters divine. Thus as to the very point in question, "the discipline of God," which they say all Christians ought to maintain; it is only (to use their own words) that "*some things* which they maintain, as far as *some men* can *probably* conjecture, do *seem* to have been *not absurdly* gathered out of Scripture."

In short, if the objectors absolutely acted on their own principles, and if human authority were absolutely of no force, why should they be so anxious to make it appear that the wisest and most learned have been on their side? Or why endeavour by depreciation to strip their opponents of the value of great names, if, in fact, there were no value in them? Human authority being valueless need not be regarded, whether for or against them.

VIII. *A declaration of what is the Truth in the foregoing matters.*

To conclude. *All* the actions of beings endued with reason, are good or evil. For though it may be said that things are only good or evil, which are the result of deliberation and consequent voluntary action; and, therefore, that things done constantly and daily without deliberation, naturally as it were, can have no moral good or evil: yet even in those things, which

seem thus to be done undeliberately, there is after all, deliberation and choice connected with them, albeit the process is so rapid between the volition and the performance from daily custom, that they might be mistaken for involuntary actions¹.

Now, whatsoever is good, is approved by God, in proportion to the goodness thereof. Some things, however, may have so low a grade in goodness, as simply not to merit God's disapproval, and to these the light of Nature alone may often be our guide.

Other things, however, are not only allowed, but *required* as strictly necessary to salvation; and in these Scripture must be our chief guide, Nature being insufficient, without the super-added and effectual light of God's word.

Moreover, other things there are, which, though not so required of necessity, that to leave them undone excludes from salvation, are notwithstanding of such acceptance with God, that an ample reward is laid up for them in heaven; such as, though not strictly exacted by Nature or in Scripture, our minds prompt us unto. Of this kind, was that love of primitive Christians, which prompted them to sell their posses-

¹ Thus, for instance, animals naturally take food and rest; but man may, if he choose, *stay* his inclinations for these; hence the force of the Saviour's rebuke to His disciples, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?"

sions and lay the price at the Apostles' feet; and which induced St. Paul to abridge his own liberty by voluntary choice, in his Christian ministrations.

Since, then, there can be no evil in those various actions whereof God approveth, and He approves more than He specifically commands; and obedience to His precepts known only by the law of Nature must be acceptable to Him; it seems unreasonable to make Scripture *only* the rule of moral action. All God's testimonies are indeed perfect, *i. e.* sufficient for the end designed by them; and so is Scripture for its specific object, but no farther. Now its object is, to deliver full and complete instruction in all things necessary to salvation, the knowledge whereof man could not naturally attain unto. This it does; and whoever considers it incomplete, and thence either looketh for a further revelation, or presumes to eke out its imagined deficiency by man's *traditions*, is in great error. On the other hand, those are equally mistaken, who would enlarge and stretch the scope of Scripture to such an extent, as that *every* thing lawful to be done and practised, must necessarily be contained within it. Indeed, most perplexing and absurd results would follow this latter view: for if the whole of natural law were thereby abrogated, and men were called upon to regulate every the most minute action by Scripture, nay even to search it previously, in

order to find sentences specially to guide them, lest otherwise they should commit sin: if this were so, the very business of life must stand still; natural instincts, and reasonable discretion being of no avail, men in every relation of life would be in doubt and difficulty, and those of weak conscience in absolute despair.

Two opposite opinions have been held as to the sufficiency of Scripture. The schools of Rome erroneously teach, that it is insufficient of itself, without the superadded force of Traditions. Others, running into the opposite extreme, hold that it containeth not only all things necessary for salvation, but everything else, so that anything done without its warrant, is sin. Which latter opinion, by an overstraining for the honour of Scripture as it were, and claiming for it that which does not legitimately belong to it, tends even to weaken the reverend regard which it ought to have of all men; and hence the upholders of it may injure the very cause they wish to exalt.

BOOK III.

CONCERNING THE SECOND ASSERTION "THAT IN SCRIPTURE THERE MUST BE OF NECESSITY CONTAINED A FORM OF CHURCH POLITY, THE LAWS WHEREOF MAY IN NO WISE BE ALTERED."

I. *What THE CHURCH is ; and in what respect Laws of Polity are required.*

OUR attention being directed to Church Government or Polity, it may be as well here to consider the true nature of *the Church of Christ*, and wherein it consisteth.

And first, it may be divided into the *Church Mystical* and the *Church Visible*.

That Church of Christ which is properly termed His *body mystical*, can be but *one* ; yet it cannot be sensibly discerned, inasmuch as one part thereof is already in heaven with Him ; and of the other part which is on earth, our bodily senses do not enable us to discern the inward graces and virtues which constitute them true members. Our minds can however

readily apprehend the existence of such a body, and likewise that it may be very numerous; albeit, the spiritual marks, whereby they are distinguished, be known only to God Himself, the searcher of hearts. Unto this Church mystical it is, that all the Scripture promises of the endless love and saving mercy of God in Christ belong.

In like manner, the *Visible Church* of God is but *one*; commencing in the beginning, and to be continued to the end of the world. It is, however, divided in point of time, into two portions; the one *before*, the other *after* the coming of Christ; and all professed believers in Him constitute the Visible Church, properly so called, of Christ. Their *unity* consists in having “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.”

Christians those are not, who confess not Jesus to be “their Lord¹.” Neither will this acknowledgment, simply of itself, be sufficient, unless they embrace “that faith²” which He published to the world. Nor yet again, can they be of Christ’s visible Church, unless admitted therein by the door of “Baptism;” as were, for instance, the eunuch by Philip³; Paul by Ananias⁴; and the three thousand souls by Peter⁵.

But wherever these outward signs exist, of “one

¹ Acts ii. 36.

² Rev. ii. 13.

³ Acts viii. 38.

⁴ Acts xxii. 16.

⁵ Acts ii. 41.

Lord, one Faith, one Baptism," there is the Visible Church of Christ; the professors whereof, if they bear the external marks¹, are still members, albeit they may be wicked livers, or heretical and impious.

True it is, that such conduct will exclude from salvation, and that wicked nominal professors cannot possibly belong to the mystical body of Christ's Church; still to the visible Church they do belong; even as Christ Himself likeneth the kingdom of heaven to a net, wherein good and bad fishes were caught²; or to a field, wherein tares and wheat grew together³: which state of things, or the intermingling of the bad with the good, shall continue till the final consummation of all things. Indeed, God hath *ever* had, and will have, His visible Church upon earth. The Israelites, for instance, even when backsliding, rebelling, and suffering punishment, were still His Church. Retaining, as they did, His law, and the seals of His covenant, the sheep of His flock they still continued to be, in the very depth of their disobedience.

Many errors have arisen, for want of duly observing this distinction between the visible and the mystical Church. Hence the error of the African Council at

¹ For want of these marks it is, that Saracens, Jews, and Infidels are excluded from the visible Christian Church.

² Matt. xiii. 47.

³ Matt. xiii. 24.

Carthage (A.D. 256), who, supposing that heretics and men of corrupt belief, could not administer the true sacrament of Baptism, ordered rebaptization in certain cases, before admission into the Church¹.

Their reasoning was correct, which went to show that Baptism belongeth to *the Church* only, and can only be validly administered therein; but their error lay in assuming that heretics were in no sort any part of the visible Church of Christ. And this opinion was therefore subsequently condemned by the Council of Nice; and, indeed, revoked by the chief authors of it themselves.

And truly it is in the spirit of the same error, that the question is sometimes now put to us, "Where was your Church before the time of Luther?"

The Church of Christ, which was from the beginning, is, and continueth unto the end. Luther erected no *new* Church. But, as in the different periods of the Jewish Church, it did not continue always alike in point of soundness; or, as amongst the churches of different places in apostolic times, there was not the same integrity and zeal; but occasionally a lapsing and lukewarmness: so, to reform ourselves, if at any time we have done amiss, is not to *sever* ourselves from the Church, which we were of before. In the Church we were, and in the Church we still are; even

¹ See more on this point in Book V. Section 62.

as Judah, which having been sometime addicted to idolatry,—but still far more free from pollution than Israel,—and, becoming soundly religious, renounced idolatry, and still continued to be the Church of God¹.

And hence as the direction was given, “If Israel play the harlot, let not Judah sin;” so if the Church of Rome reform not herself, we must not therefore neglect our part of duty to God. Although from their corruptions and abominations we entirely revolt, at the same time we may hold fellowship with them, and may acknowledge them to be of the family of Christ, so far as they hold the main truths of Christianity; praying that through grace, they may be brought to a better mind, and thus that “all might be made one.” Indeed, the same argument that is alleged to make the Church of Rome no Church at all, because of her corruptions, is also alleged by some against the Church of England, because of what they choose to call *her* corruptions.

Heretics, therefore, may be a part, though a maimed part, of the visible Church, and are not utterly cut off therefrom. And if the Fathers (as is sometimes done) seem to make a distinction between the visible Church and heretical companies, they are not to be construed as excluding them entirely from

¹ Hosea iv. 15—17. Josh. xxiv. 15.

the company of Believers, but as separating them from the fellowship of sound Believers. Where professed unbelief is, there can be no Church: but there may be, where the belief is not altogether sound.

Hence, is seen the soundness of the answer of the College of Geneva to Knox, who held (as likewise Calvin did) that children of papists, who were idolaters as they said, ought not to be baptized, till either their parents repented, or the children themselves came to years of discretion. The sentence was, "Wheresoever the profession of Christianity hath not utterly perished, and been extinct, infants are beguiled of their right, if the common seal be denied them." From which the conclusion may be drawn, that men remain in the visible Church until they utterly renounce all profession of Christianity; and hence the children of such have a title to the signs and seals of the Christian covenant.

Though, therefore, heresies and crimes (if not repented of and forsaken) exclude from the mystical Church of Christ; and do also make a separation from the sound part of the visible Church; yet they do not sever from the latter entirely: even Excommunication itself only excludes from association in visible holy duties. Hence the error of Papists, who exclude all the opponents of their Church from the Church of Christ. Since they themselves admit, that

their own head, the Pope, may, *as an individual*, become heretical in faith, and may commit acts diabolical, even being the Pope; how can they exclude us from the Church of Christ, on the ground of alleged heresy, when they may have not only in their own Church, but at the very Head of it, an heretical individual?

In this Treatise, therefore, by the term Church, we understand *visible Church*; in which, for the preservation of Christianity, mutual association is absolutely needful. And, as the sea being one, hath yet divers names given to divers portions; so also the Catholic Church is divided into a number of societies, every one of which is termed a Church within itself. The Church, however, is not a mere assembly of men, which being congregated for some public act, dissolves when the object is accomplished; but it is a Society, or a number of men belonging unto some Christian fellowship, within certain places and limits, and having communion in the public exercise of such duties as are mentioned by the Apostles, viz. “instruction, breaking of bread, and prayer¹.”

As then, those of the mystical body of Christ have *inward* graces, whereby they differ from all others; and as those appertaining to the visible body of His Church have *external* marks of profession to distin-

¹ Acts ii. 42.

guish them; so, the several Christian societies to which the name of *Church* is severally given, as the Church of Rome, of Corinth, of England, must have some corresponding *general properties* belonging to them as Christian societies. And one chief property is evidently, *Church Polity*, or a Form of ordering the public spiritual affairs of the Church of God.

II. *Whether the Scripture ought necessarily to contain a particular SET FORM of Church Polity; the things thereof not being necessary to salvation.*

As however language seems necessary for mankind, and yet all speak not the same; so, though Church Polity be necessary for all churches, yet it doth not therefore follow, that the *same form* thereof should be used for all. And though the polity must be from God originally; yet it doth not seem absolutely necessary that it should be supernaturally revealed by Him in all cases, as it was under the Mosaic dispensation. If it be framed according to that light of Nature, which God hath given to man, it is, nevertheless ultimately from Him. Those, therefore, who object to any form of Church Polity, except it be set down in Scripture, should explain whether they mean it to be *expressly and literally* so noted in Scripture; or only deduced therefrom *inferentially*. The former

evidently cannot be asserted of any, not even of their own form; and in the latter case, it is equally evident, that *general* precepts may be complied with in forms *varying* from each other, and yet all equally consonant to the axioms of Scripture.

It hath been stated¹ that matters of Faith are of a different character from Ceremonial observances and polity; that the former being necessary to salvation, must be contained in Scripture, or collected from it; whereas, it is only necessary that the latter should contain nothing contrary to the Scripture. And here two objections are next urged; first, “That we *mis-distinguish*, because matters of discipline and church government are (as the objectors say) necessary to faith and salvation; whereas, we put a difference between them.” And, secondly, “That we are guilty of *injurious dealing* with the Scripture, as if it contained only the principal points, the rude and unfashioned matters of building the church, but had left out that which belongs to the form and fashion of it: as if there were in the Scripture no more than only to cover the Church’s nakedness, and not chains, bracelets, rings, jewels, to adorn her!”

¹ In Whitgift’s Answer to the “Admonition.”

III. *That Church Polity, and matters of Faith and Salvation are DISTINCT things.*

MUCH mischief arises from want of correctly *distinguishing* ; rightly to do so, is to sever things different in nature, and to discern wherein they do differ ; and to imagine a difference where none exists, is to *misdistinguish*.

Of matters belonging to the Church, all are not exactly alike. Some things are merely of *faith* ; *e.g.* the doctrine of the Trinity, which it is sufficient that we know and *believe*. Others, as the works of *charity*, require not only to be known, but to be *done*. Indeed, the objectors themselves divide the Gospel into doctrine and discipline ; and hence, as by the term doctrine, they evidently mean matters of faith, and by discipline, church regulation, it would seem that their charge against us of *misdistinguishing*, because we separate between faith and polity, is idle cavilling.

With respect to the second charge of *injurious dealing* : We hold, that what the Church of God ought to *know* or *do*, is learned partly from the law of nature. But, inasmuch as her teaching is not fully sufficient, God hath collected in Scripture the most important points of her teaching ; and also hath given therein the super-added instruction, by revelation, of such things necessary to salvation, as we could not other-

wise have known. Hence, therefore, Scripture containeth all things needful to salvation : and, indeed, whatsoever matter there is, whereof it may be said, “ This not to *believe* is eternal death and damnation ;” or, “ This, every soul that will live, *must do* ;” of which sort are the articles of the Christian faith, and the sacraments of Christ’s Church :—all such matters if the Scripture did *not* contain, it would not be a sufficient guide and rule for the Church. But, on the contrary, in whatever is merely accessory, and what our own discretion may teach, as being meet and convenient, the Church is no further tied to Scripture, than that nothing be admitted which is contrary thereto.

Now, it may be asked, what becomes of the charge of injurious dealing, in this making some things, as matters of faith, *necessary* ; and some, as matters of polity, only *accessory* and appendent ? Our Lord Himself even made the difference when he termed judgment, mercy, and fidelity “ the greater and *weightier* matters of the law.” And the objectors themselves overthrow their own argument, by their own comparison, in likening the one to the garments *necessary* to cover the body, and the other to the accidental superfluities of “ rings and jewels,” that merely *adorn* it.

IV. *That hereby we do not DEROGATE from the Authority of Scripture.*

As it is no disparagement to Nature, that she provideth all things needful, but leaveth her creatures to furnish themselves with others by their own efforts; as man, for instance, to clothe himself; even so it is no valid imputation against the perfection of Scripture, that it leaveth some few things to man's discretion. And if we hold, that Scripture contains not only all things absolutely necessary, but infinite treasures besides; that it throws a light upon almost every part of knowledge; that even as to the point in question, Church government, it contains the *general principles* thereof, gives many *precepts* thereto, and furnishes many *examples* thereof, though it does not descend to particulars, and prescribe any special form and fashion of it, leaving that to man's judgment and discretion:—when all this is admitted by us, what becomes of the accusation that we deal injuriously with Scripture?

V. *Of the assertion, “That nothing should be established in the Church beyond what Scripture EXPRESSLY commands.”*

BUT it is humiliating to confess error; and therefore the objectors betake themselves to another refuge, and quote the words of the law, “Ye shall put

nothing unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye take aught therefrom¹,” as proving their position, that nothing should be established in the Church without command of Scripture. And hence, that various rites, observances, offices, and dignities in the Church of England, are wrong, being unscriptural. Now, to endeavour by any argument to make that seem divine, which is not so; or, *vice versâ*, to make that not to seem so, which is, must be accounted a heinous sin. And it would be well, did the objectors in this matter look to their own practice of often quoting words from historical narrations of Scripture, as specially applicable to the ordinary affairs of their own life.

VI. *The injurious CONSEQUENCE of the foregoing assertion.*

BUT, admitting, for the sake of argument, that their objection be valid; in that case it will go to condemn all Christian Churches in the world; inasmuch as there is not one which doth not contain many things which Scripture doth not command, and yet which it would be wrong in us to condemn. Even in the Church of God in our Saviour's time, there were rites and observances; to mention but one, “the fasting on festival days till the sixth hour²,” not anywhere commanded in Scripture.

¹ Deut. iv. 2.

² Acts ii. 15.

VII. *The Consequence sought to be evaded, by confining it to IMPORTANT matters.*

It is, however, again urged, that though there be in Scripture no special and specific direction for every thing, yet there are general rules for all things towards one end; and that to prevent men's acting according to their own fancy, the Apostle has set down *four* general rules, and that all things in the Church must be appointed not only *not against*, but *by* and *according to* them. The rules are, "Nothing scandalous or offensive unto any, especially unto the Church of God¹." "All things in order and with seemliness²;" "All unto edification³;" and, "All things unto the glory of God⁴."

These rules being alleged to prove that nothing may be done in the Church but what Scripture commands, must be admitted by the objectors as being binding, *only* because set down by the Spirit of God; and on their own hypothesis, therefore, had they *not* been so set down, we should as much sin by observing them, as we now do (it is said) by not observing them.

Now, in the Jewish Church, many things were observed, not being expressly set down in Scripture,

¹ 1 Cor. x. 32.

² 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

³ 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

⁴ Rom. xiv. 6, 7. and 1 Cor. x. 31.

e. g. the fixing of the hour for daily sacrifice; the building of synagogues, order of burial, rites of marriage, &c. And will it be said, that the Jews sinned therein? or rather, is it not clear, that in thus acting, they rightly followed that natural law written on all men's hearts, and which is binding at all times and in every age of the Church? And hence, that we are as inculpable in following it, as ever the Jews were; and also that many things, so they be not against Scripture, may be lawfully done in the Church by the light of reason and discretion.

Indeed, it would seem, according to their argument, to matter little whether the Scripture commands be *general* or *special*; for if by a particular application, a general rule may be constrained to have such a specific line of direction as that no other could be right, then it is clear that the Church has no discretionary choice left her to establish any thing.

If, then, they grant (as they cannot but do) that these are only rules of general direction, and not restricting in specialities, so as to prevent the establishment of any devout custom, tending to edification, provided no specific command of Scripture be violated thereby, their argument is at an end. That which only could support it, is for them to prove, "That men ought not to make laws for church government, but are bound for ever to keep those only which they

find already made in Scripture.” This, indeed, after all, is the position they have taken; although they have somewhat inconsistently, or rather unwittingly, alleged the afore-mentioned four general rules to be followed, in making laws for the Church; inasmuch as this very allegation of theirs implies the *power of making laws* to be vested in her members; as also the very supposition of a *general law* implies that there may be sundry modes of executing it.

VIII. *The same attempted by construing “commanded” to mean “grounded upon” Scripture, as opposed to the light of Nature.*

It is, however, lastly urged, in defence of their position, “That all Church orders should be *grounded* on the word of God.”

Now, there is evidently much difference between a thing being positively *commanded*, and being only *grounded*; *e. g.* St. Paul’s recommending celibacy, under particular circumstances¹, is grounded on Scripture, but no where commanded.

Besides, the will of God being partly known by the light of Nature, and not by Scripture alone, if the Church in some things following the former (it being equally from God, as well as the light of revelation),

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 8—26.

establish any thing not repugnant to Scripture, and thereby fulfil the will of God naturally known, who shall be bold enough to denounce it?

There are many, however, who, under the impression that our estimate of the power and authority of God's Word will be weakened, in proportion as we attribute any thing to human reason, disparage her altogether. From certain passages of Holy Writ, teaching "that the natural man perceiveth not the things of God¹;" warning to "beware of philosophy²;" and asserting "that the foolishness of preaching" (so termed in opposition to the pretended wisdom of man) "saves believers³:" from such passages of Scripture, and from allegations of their own, that "the admirers of human wisdom have been generally opposers of the Gospel," and that "it must be the Spirit of God, and not the reason of man that shall convert our soul,"—they seem to draw a sort of conclusion, that to be *ripe in faith* we must be *raw in judgment*, and that reason is an enemy to religion, and childish simplicity the mother of divine wisdom.

Now this disparagement of reason seems to have arisen, as well from its being put in an undue comparison, as it were, with the Divine wisdom on the one hand,—whereby it is totally eclipsed in the glory that

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 14.

² Col. ii. 8.

³ 1 Cor. i. 19.

excelleth; as also by its being improperly confounded with the false philosophy of man on the other,—whereby it is mistakenly depreciated.

That there are, however, some divine things which human reason is *able* of itself to discern, St. Paul shows, when speaking of men in their natural state, he says, “They knew both God, and the law of God¹.” And there are also other things divine, which are beyond the power of reason to attain to, without the aid of God’s Spirit; and which even when they are proclaimed, require His grace to make them objects of faith; as when Paul preached the doctrine of the resurrection to Festus², it seemed to him as an idle fancy. When, however, Nature is shown thus to require the aid of grace, it by no means follows that grace is denied the use of Nature.

And when we are cautioned to beware of philosophy, it is not the sound exercise of our natural reason that is discountenanced, but only that specious mode of argument which throws a false gloss over things; and against which it is even necessary for us to be armed by a knowledge of true philosophy that we may detect its fallacy.

Indeed, when it is considered that heresies prevailed, by the use of false philosophy wresting the Truth

¹ Rom. i. 21.

² Acts xxv. 19.

through its logical subtilties, the only remedy (humanly speaking) was a competent skill in sound philosophic reasoning, to expose and confute them. Hence we find the heretic Cresconius complaining of St. Augustine, as being too logical. When St. Paul required of Titus¹ *ability* to convict heretics, we may readily suppose he did not condemn the use of reason. And indeed, the Catholic Fathers upheld the cause of truth by combating heretics with their own weapons, and foiling them in their endeavours to pervert Scripture, in order to uphold their own vain fancies or corrupt affections.

And with respect to worldly knowledge; every part thereof, whereby truth is elicited, is precious, and may in some degree contribute to illustrate even Scripture truth itself. The Egyptian wisdom in Moses, and the Chaldean in Daniel; the moral and civil wisdom in Solomon; the oratorical Grecian wisdom that Paul brought from Tarsus, or the Judaical which he learned from Gamaliel at Jerusalem;—all contributed in various ways to prepare and fit them for their several divine appointments. It is only where this knowledge is vainly abused by men, to the maintenance of their own self-willed notions, in opposition to the counsel of God, and the rejection of His

¹ Titus i. 9—11.

revelation, that it is condemned; as in the case of unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, whose natural wisdom, by their abuse of it, became folly.

As, however, the word of God is absolutely perfect for its object, reason is not used to supply any *defect* therein, but simply as an instrument whereby to obtain the *fruit* thereof; it is as a two-edged sword, when in the hands of reason to apply it. And hence the twelve Apostles of our Saviour, being naturally simple and illiterate, were endowed with miraculous powers to confirm their doctrine; as they were also with wisdom and eloquence from above to teach and enforce it. With St. Paul, the case was indeed different somewhat; he needed not the miraculous endowment of eloquent argument, inasmuch as he was already learned in it by study: but when it was objected by gainsayers, that his success in converting the Gentiles was owing solely to his learning, he proves the contrary, and that it was in the “demonstration of the Spirit and of power¹:” and yet at the same time, the whole scope of his argument goes to show that, though not in any way depending upon it, still he did not neglect his power of natural ability and persuasion; but that God accredited it, as He also did the supernaturally-given eloquence of the

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 4.

others, by the force of miracles. Hence the wisdom of man may add considerably to our ability, as merely Christian men, both of learning and teaching the truth of Christ.

Indeed, either in the matter of conversion, or for the confirmation of faith, the force and value of natural reason is great. For though without grace it be nothing, yet nevertheless reason is necessary as a recipient, whereby man is enabled to *apprehend* the things which grace discovers to him, and to feel the reasonableness of God's service. Hence none but *men*, because being possessed of reason, are capable of receiving religious knowledge and impressions; and not even they, until their reason hath acquired a certain maturity. The Scripture teaches the science of divine things; and like every other science, it requires reason for its comprehension: even as the Apostle called upon his hearers to exercise this faculty, saying to them, "*Judge ye what I speak.*"

It is true, that Scripture teaches some things above our natural powers; but these things become objects of our belief, because our reason hath previously led us to acquiesce in Scripture, as being the *word of God*.

Whereas Scripture is said to contain all things necessary to salvation, it has been sometimes absurdly asked, what Scripture teaches the *authority* of Scrip-

ture? As if Scripture might thus prove itself. But as all other sciences *pre-suppose* some first general principles being understood, so Scripture teaches us supernatural truth, presuming on our being already persuaded of its own *divine authority* by other means.

Now, the first means in effecting this, is Tradition; our predecessors in succession have received it constantly, as being the word of God; and the weight of authority in the whole church of God is a strong moving cause for our reception of it as such. And this is strengthened by our reading or hearing of its contents, so correspondent to our first opinion thereof. Hence the first thing which the Fathers laboured to prove to unbelievers, was the *divine authority* of Scripture, by such arguments as they themselves might fairly allow, and which they could not deny without compromising all principles of fair reasoning. Reason, therefore, is manifestly of great use, as well for our conversion, as for our confirmation in the faith after having been converted.

And whereas, it hath been alleged by some, that there is no proof of the authority of Scripture, but by the testimony of the Spirit assuring their hearts; it would seem that they can only properly mean, that no other proof can be *effectual* where the enlightening of the Spirit is wanting. For (to say nothing of the argument by which we might plead the influence of

the Spirit upon *us*, against its impressions upon *them*), the operations of the Spirit are acknowledged so secret and undiscernible, that great caution is necessary, lest we should mistake the spirit of error for that of truth; and therefore, although it be the Spirit that guideth into all truth, yet it is more satisfactory to gather by reason, from the *quality* of things to be believed or done, that the Spirit is so directing us, than implicitly to act upon mere *imagination*.

Besides, we find the Apostles constantly urging their reasoning powers to show the meaning of Scripture; *e. g.* in the passage out of the Psalms, St. Peter reasons that David spake not of his own resurrection, but of Christ's¹. The same Apostle also calls upon Christians to be prepared to "give a reason of the hope that is in them²." And if it be thus necessary for all disciples, it is surely still more so for their teachers.

Moreover, Christ himself reasoned frequently with the Jews; *e. g.* "If Christ be the *son* of David, how then doth he call him *Lord*³?" And Paul and Barnabas reasoned with the idolatrous men of Athens⁴.

Neither did the Apostles confine the use of their reasoning faculty for the purpose of converting and convincing unbelievers alone; they equally employed

¹ Acts ii. 34; xiii. 36.² 1 Pet. iii. 15.³ Matt. xxii. 43.⁴ Acts xiv. 15.

it amongst believers, to establish matters of faith and practice; *e. g.* the admission of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ ¹.

But though the use of natural reason is thus clearly shown to be required in matters of religion, yet it is not by any means to be inferred, that reason is at all available without the grace of God's Spirit. The only thing here intended is, to show that under the guidance of the Spirit, the light of reason may be employed in discovering what laws may be fitting and expedient for the Church. And thus as human legislators probably draw their ordinances, by a reasoning process from the laws of nature and of God; so, of ecclesiastical canons it may be said, "that by the instinct of the Holy Ghost they have been made, and consecrated by the reverent acceptation of all the world."

IX. How MEN may frame laws of Church Polity, which, if not repugnant to God's word, may be acceptable to Him.

As to those Laws for the Church, which are already contained in Scripture, it is only for us simply to observe them. But, inasmuch as there are many matters, for which Scripture hath not provided any law; and many exigencies occurring, which are left to

¹ Acts xv. 8.

our own reason and discretion to provide for; the Church, therefore, is to make proper provision herein, having recourse to Scripture and reason in her choice. For no laws of the Church can ever be what they ought, unless the framers thereof follow the guidance of Scripture; the province of reason being to see how far such laws are consonant to Scripture examples, and not repugnant to its natural or its positive laws: and if there be none such bearing upon any particular case, then what may be most edifying to the Church. Hence, “to refuse the conduct of the light of nature (saith St. Augustine), is not folly alone, but accompanied with impiety.”

But as human law has been well defined to be “that which man’s reason deduces as to *particulars* from the law of nature *in general*, and authoritatively publishes;” so ecclesiastical law may be said to be “that which reason, following Scripture, may have been thereby enabled to form for the Church; care having been had herein, first, to follow the general moral law of Scripture, and next not to violate any particular or positive law which that Scripture may also contain.”

And unto the laws thus authoritatively made by a whole Church, it is incumbent upon all within her bosom to yield obedience; and when the laws of God and of the Church are not repugnant (for if they be,

the latter have no force), it is equally our duty to observe *both*: God being indirectly the author of the latter as He is positively of the former. For the Author of our reason is virtually the Author of all the good we do by its light; even as the Apostle states with respect to the laws of the heathens¹, that He was the writer of them “on the tablet of their hearts.” How much more then may He be accounted the Author of those laws which have been made by His saints endued with the grace of His Spirit, and guided by the instruction of His word? Surely, such laws, therefore, have every claim to our reverent observation, as being a most acceptable way of service unto God.

X. How Laws, even instituted by God, and recorded in Scripture, may admit of CHANGE or ADDITION.

WITH respect to the *mutability* of ecclesiastical laws, they are changed when either entirely abrogated, or partly repealed, or partly augmented. This mutability, however, seems only applicable to *positive* laws, the sanctions of which cause that to be good or evil which in itself may be indifferent. The duration of these laws is sometimes expressly set down; and if this be not done, then we can only judge of their

¹ Rom. i. 19.

mutability, by a reference to the objects or circumstances for or under which they were enacted¹. If their object appear one of continual necessity, then they are unchangeable; unless, indeed, from circumstances they become manifestly ineffectual for that object.

In whatever way God constituted laws, whether directly by Himself, or mediately through man's agency, the mutability of their *end* causes a mutability of such laws. Hence the Ceremonial Law, though recorded by Moses at God's express command, in Scripture, where it even yet remains, hath ceased; inasmuch as the end for which it was ordained, hath been fulfilled; otherwise it would have been the height of presumption to abolish what God had thus established.

This is evident from the law which the Apostles, assembled at Jerusalem, delivered unto the Church of Christ². In the preface to that law it is said, "To the Holy Ghost and to us it hath seemed good;" implying that the Apostles were merely the publishers of the law, but that the Spirit was its author, and under His holy motions they were led to pronounce it.

But some, admitting this reasoning, nevertheless

¹ It may be impossible for man's reason to perceive the intent why some positive laws were given; and then, perhaps, He only who constituted hath power to abrogate them.

Acts xv. 28.

stumble at another point; they cannot allow of any change in a Divine law, if the end and object for which it was constituted still remain; albeit it may be, that the *means* appointed by that law are, through change of circumstances, inadequate to attain that end. And thus they contend for orders and offices *ever* remaining, as originally appointed by God; inasmuch as the *end*, viz. the government of the Church, being perpetual, it would be impious to change a divine appointment. But laws are, after all, merely instruments to an end; and evidently occasions may arise, to cause a fresh adaptation of the instrument in order to accomplish the same end. Thus, for instance, a law was promulgated¹ to check theft, by ordering a quadruple restitution. Now theft is yet, and will probably always continue; but the law of quadruple restitution is evidently inadequate now as a check, and therefore requireth alteration to accomplish its *end*.

Hence, of the three descriptions of law which the Jews received, viz. moral, ceremonial, and judicial,—the moral, in the nature of things, remains unchanged, and unchangeable; the ceremonial hath ceased, the end thereof having been fulfilled: and the judicial, though the end remains, yet the original method being, by alteration of times and circumstances inadequate,

¹ Exod. xxii. 1.

may in those particulars be changed, wherein it is obviously required.

It is not, that men can presume to improve upon what God hath ordained; all that He determines, is the best possible for its object: but many things of His have been changed for the better; although what *now* succeeds better, would have been worse when that which is now changed was instituted. And hence, in this case it is, not that men *presume*, but only *yield* to God's ordinance itself, in its own nature requiring a change.

It is however argued, that the doctrines of the Gospel and its precepts of discipline, form a *whole*; and that Discipline is therefore "part of the Gospel," and may not be altered.

Now in reference to points of doctrine, as the Unity of God, the Trinity of Persons, salvation by Christ, and the like,—these must necessarily continue immutable: articles of faith and moral precept, either expressly set down in Scripture, or plainly deducible therefrom, are ever necessary to be believed and followed in order to salvation. But things with respect to outward discipline, and Church polity, are clearly of a different kind, and may be changed, as we see even in the Apostles' time and practice¹. It is, indeed, admitted by the objectors, that things of mere circumstance and not of substance, in discipline, are

¹ Acts xv. 27—30.

variable according to exigencies of things : and if this be so,—no matter how trifling the affairs be,—then the argument that a law of discipline must, simply because made by God, for ever remain, is at an end. And there is no reason why laws for Church government must be necessarily permanent and unchangeable¹.

XI. *Whether Christ meant His Laws to be utterly UNCHANGEABLE, and not susceptible of addition.*

BUT laws changeable in themselves, are nevertheless not to be changed, should there be any express prohibition against it; and therefore if there should be any form of Church polity so immutably set down in Scripture, we are under perpetual obligation to observe it.

Now the objectors allege, that if Moses, being inferior to Christ, did establish perpetual laws of Church government, then *a fortiori*, Christ's ought to be permanent; otherwise He is either inferior, or less faithful than Moses.

But we have the Apostle's testimony that *both* were equally faithful; only the one was so as a servant in charge, the other as a Master over his own possession².

¹ Neither is the argument as to the mutability of divine law, pursued to prop our own cause; indeed, were the contrary proved, it might be clearly shown to make still more against the Puritan cause than the present one.

² Heb. iii. 5, 6.

And as to the allegation, that inasmuch as God gave settled laws of government to the Mosaic Church, it would argue a diminution of regard, to leave the Christian Church without; we must not reason on such accidental difference. For were the argument sound, it would hold equally as to the laws which He gave for the *secular* and *civil* guidance of the Jews; whereas Christ manifestly gives none of that sort for Christians. Yet we are not to imagine therefrom that God has less regard for the temporal estate of Christians than He had for that of the Jews.

Moreover, the very *mode* of delivery of positive laws by Moses, being systematic and in set form, shows a striking difference to that incidental and occasional manner in which positive precepts are given in the Gospel.

And it is further remarkable, that the positive laws of Moses were, generally speaking, *restricted* to their residence in *Judæa*. He distinguishes plainly between the moral laws of the Two Tables, and the positive precepts of ordinances and ceremonies; *e. g.* “The Lord spake unto you, out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but no similitude: only ye heard a voice. And *He* declared unto you his *covenant*, which He commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone. And the Lord commanded *me* at that time to teach you *statutes* and *judgments*, that ye might

•

do them in the land, whither ye go to possess it¹.” Here there is an evident difference made between the two. The Moral Law was uttered by the voice of God himself to the assembled Israelites; written with the finger of God; and called by the name of *Covenant*: the Positive Precepts were neither written nor promulgated by God himself; but were made known to the people through Moses; were termed merely *ordinances*, and were restrained to “the land whither they should go to possess it.” And the same distinction precisely is observed in the following chapter. Indeed, the positive laws being thus framed in reference to the persons and the places of their residence, then, seeing that nations and people differ materially, it is unreasonable to suppose that positive laws should be alike for all.

Moreover, we find that on many occasions, matters occurred among the Jews, for which no law had been expressly provided; *e. g.* though blasphemy and sabbath-breaking were forbidden, yet no specific punishment was denounced for each; and, therefore, when instances arose, they were obliged specially to consult the oracle of God². Now, the occurrence of *peculiar* cases must equally take place amongst us, as amongst them: but it is evident that we have not the same source of remedy to avail ourselves of as they had, viz. the oracle of God, or the Prophet through whom

¹ Deut. iv. 12—14.

² Lev. xxiv. 12; Num. xv. 33.

to consult Him: and therefore it is also plain, that their case is not to be taken as an exact parallel of our own, in reference to the making of laws.

Again: the Jews were to continue until the coming of Christ, and the gathering of nations unto Him¹; in the safety of their outward State, until that period, was involved the fulfilment of prophecy, and consequently the salvation of the world. Hence it was necessary to provide for its preservation, as well against foreign foes, as against internal divisions. And here we see a peculiar government exercised to accomplish this. In all their wars, or compacts of peace with other nations, they were to be entirely guided by the oracles of God or His prophets; and in their civil polity they had special positive laws given, and rulers appointed by God himself, as occasion required. And thus, though of an obstinate self-willed temperament, and generally disliked by other nations, they continued unsubverted until the appointed times of the Messiah. Hence we see a sufficient cause of dissimilitude between the Jewish nation *before* Christ, and the kingdoms of the world *since*.

As to the allegation, that because God hath shown less care to us in providing for our *temporal* polity, than for that of the Jews, so on that account, and by way of balance, as it were, the provision for our

¹ Gen. xlix. 10.

spiritual condition must be more express, and its directions, therefore, more exact and binding; it is a mere assumption, grounded only on men's fancies. In brief, godliness hath, unto *us* as to *them*, "the promise of this life and of that which is to come;" God spake unto them by His prophets, unto us by His Son; the mysteries of grace and salvation but dimly shadowed forth to them, have clearly shone unto us. But for outward government of the Church, since Christ manifestly hath not given positive laws, nor gone into particulars with us, as Moses did with them; neither hath appointed any extraordinary methods, such as they had in the oracles and prophets, for extraordinary occasions; it seems a clear deduction that we must have (what they required not) a freedom to make such laws as are expedient.

It is, however, here objected, that St. Paul solemnly charges Timothy (and by consequence the whole Church of Christ), "to keep what was committed to him safe and sound, till the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ¹;" and hence, that as this charge included laws for Church government, these ought invariably to be observed till the coming of Christ.

But on investigation it appears that the *original* has no reference to ordinances and ceremonies, but simply is "keep *την εντολην*," the commandment; *one* espe-

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 13.

cial amongst many, the great commandment of his calling, viz. “the *faithful preaching of the Gospel* ;” even as the same Apostle solemnly urges the same Timothy again, “I charge thee in the sight of God,—preach the word of God¹.” And with reference to the phrase, “till the appearance of Christ,” it seems to import, not the time *during which* it was to be kept, but rather the time *whereunto* the final reward for its faithful keeping was reserved; and the disciples were to keep going on in sound doctrine and patient obedience, till their Master should finally reward their faithfulness in well-doing. And even if any admit not this interpretation, it is clear that the *εντολην* cannot be, even by the objectors, taken so largely, as to comprehend *every* thing the Apostle commanded Timothy; *e. g.* the precept concerning the choice of widows²; and thus their argument fails, and they cannot hence maintain that *all* things positively commanded in the Church were of perpetual obligation. We admit that *some* were.

Indeed, we have sundry Church laws which the objectors hold to be inconvenient; therefore they cannot be Christ’s, but must be men’s additions: and yet they do not style these additions,—*e. g.* prescript attire and funeral rites,—*unlawful*, but only *inconve-*

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 1.

² 1 Tim. v. 9.

nient. Hence it is clear, on their own admission, that it is not unlawful to *add* to the laws of Christ, and consequently Christ doth not prohibit addition to Church laws.

Now even Calvin himself (to whose opinion they profess great reverence) states that the Church hath power to make laws for ceremonies and external discipline. But they attempt to explain this away, by saying, that all discipline and ceremonies (amongst which they presume to reckon Baptism and the Lord's Supper) are not in the power of the Church to alter or abrogate.

Now first, in this answer they, by implication, insinuate falsely, that we hold the very Sacraments as changeable ordinances; as also that we give the Church power to change *all* ordinances whatever. Whereas, in the matter of merely external rites and discipline, we do not deny that there are some which are of perpetual obligation: only we hold that *some* are changeable, according to the exigence of the case; a position which they themselves hold as to what they call matters of *circumstance* and not of *substance*. And hence, the question resolves itself into one, not of *principle*, but of *extent* merely. And after all, it only remains for them to show whether we have exceeded the limits of a just discretion, and abrogated or added beyond what we ought: and herein we think that

they will not be able to succeed; for whatever Christ hath commanded for ever to be observed in His Church, we have not presumed to abrogate; whatever has been changed has been only in things changeable, and to such extent and in such manner, as difference of times and manners required; and what we have added, is only such as we hope no law of Christ doth anywhere condemn.

To *recapitulate* somewhat. So far as the Church is considered in a spiritual sense, as Christ's *mystical body*, it needeth no external polity; the divine law of faith and works being sufficient. But as a *visible society* and body politic, it necessarily requires laws of polity.

It followeth, then,—*What* laws are fittest for the Church? Now certain objectors set up a position, that Divine authority alone is to be followed therein, and that no laws are allowable, but such as Holy Scripture commanded: herein differing not only from the opinion of the Fathers, but from the practice of the Jews, even as sanctioned by Christ Himself; *e. g.* in their appointment of the Feast of Dedication, and in other ceremonial observances.

Having, however, assumed this position, it followed necessarily, that there must be a *complete form* of Church polity set down in Holy Writ. And here arose the difficulty on their part. Now we allege a

difference between matters essential to salvation, and those of ecclesiastical polity; which even themselves tacitly acknowledge¹. And we moreover admit that Scripture not only contains all things necessary for salvation, but something beyond, and connected with Church polity; still that many things may be requisite for complete Church polity, not set down in Scripture, and even that some things in it may become unnecessary from change of circumstances². It has also been shown³ how injurious it is to apply their own construction of Scripture herein, generally to *all* times and places: and how unsatisfactory their method is, of *general* directions, in contradistinction to *special*⁴; and of the exclusion of *reason*, in selection⁵. Next it hath been set forth, how the Church may frame laws⁶; and how God's giving certain laws in Scripture doth not preclude their being altered in any respect whatever⁷; and how absurd is the parallel in this case attempted to be set up between Moses and Christ⁸, in alleging that the latter ought to have established a complete Church polity.

And whereas, the objectors further allege, that as the Church is the city and the house of the living God, so it must have a complete polity and regular government, appointed by Him its head and king, permanent

¹ Ch. iii.² Ch. iv.³ Ch. v. and vi.⁴ Ch. vii.⁵ Ch. viii.⁶ Ch. ix.⁷ Ch. x.⁸ Ch. xi.

and unchangeable; though at the same time, when brought to a point, they admit that this can only be applicable to some things of *greater* moment and weight, and that *minor* matters may be changed: it is hence evident that these grave and weighty matters of theirs after all, are doctors, pastors, lay-elders, elder-ships, synods, women-church-servants, &c. &c.; and it seems, therefore, that the argument has been with them somewhat uselessly maintained. For we also contend, that there are some matters whereto the Church is perpetually bound, such as the public religious duties of the administration of the Word, Prayer, Sacraments, &c.; but that the laws of polity merely appoint the times and manner wherein they are to be performed, and therefore are not immutably permanent.

Now, in an orderly public service, *all* cannot be engaged alike; therefore the first thing in a polity, is a difference of persons, to perform different functions: and hence *clergy* are required as leaders; who, albeit their qualifications be not equal to their office, yet for the office-sake respect is due to them.

And as a body of clergy contains numbers, here again there must be distinctions among them; and hence *bishops* (succeeding to the office of Apostles), and *priests* subordinate to them, have plainly been appointed, as we read in Scripture, since the earliest

times of the Church ; into which orders there must evidently be some special solemn admission ; it not being left to any and every man's conceit, to enter as he pleases.

Hence it seems clear, that in our forms there is nothing repugnant to Scripture ; and that where it gives directions, they are more closely followed by us than by the objectors themselves ; indeed, their polity is faulty, in making no distinction, as is done in Scripture, between the grades of ministers ; as it is also in holding that such things as lay-elders, women-church-servants, &c. are things immutable, whereas Scripture doth not even mention them.

As to their *a priori* argument, that God must needs have constituted a Church polity ; why should they labour to establish that, if as they assert God *hath* done so ? Doth not this very conduct show a suspicion of the weakness of their own cause ? How much better simply to receive, and meekly to acquiesce in what God *hath* plainly condescended to make known, than presumptuously to set up imaginary schemes as to what He *ought* to have done !

BOOK IV.

CONCERNING THE THIRD ASSERTION “ THAT OUR FORM OF CHURCH POLITY IS CORRUPTED WITH POPIISH ORDERS, RITES, AND CEREMONIES, BANISHED OUT OF CERTAIN REFORMED CHURCHES, WHOSE EXAMPLE THEREIN WE OUGHT TO HAVE FOLLOWED.”

I. *The GREAT USE of Ceremonies in the Church.*

THE simplicity of manners and spirit in former times did not lead to captiousness in minor matters ; and even men of acknowledged talent felt a reverent reserve in reflecting upon the practices of the Church, unless they were notoriously requiring remedy. But in the present age, zeal seems to have drowned charity, and pride of intellect, meekness ; so that her own children may be seen forward to deride those very rites and ceremonies, which holy and virtuous men of old strenuously maintained against profane adversaries.

Without further remark, however, we shall proceed to inquire into the ceremonies of our Church as a

general question, not entering at present into special details.

Now in every great public duty in God's Church, besides the matter and form wherein the essence consists, there must be some outward fashion wherein it may be decently administered; *e. g.* the sacrament of the Lord's Supper requireth bread and wine, as the *matter* thereof, and certain words of blessing as the *form*; but to its decent administration more is required than simply these.

The *end* of all religious actions is edification; and men are edified, either when their understandings are informed, or their hearts suitably moved, or their minds reverently excited. Hence, not only speech has been employed; but sundry methods addressed to the other senses, especially visible signs to the eye,—the impressions conveyed by that sense being often vivid and lasting. And this is so natural, that in every nation, no public actions of importance, whether spiritual or temporal, are permitted to pass without some visible solemnity, which maketh a more durable impression upon the witnesses thereof, than mere words might do.

Hence it does not become any one to condemn as idle follies various ceremonial observances, simply because he knows not the reasons why they were instituted. It was the custom, in giving an oath among

the Jews, not merely to attest the God of Heaven, but to add the ceremony of “putting the hand under the thigh¹.” Amongst the Romans, in manumitting a slave, not only was his master before a magistrate in public court, to say, “I will that this man be free;” but to strike him on the head, shave his hair, touch him thrice with a rod, and give him a white cap. All which things probably had some significant use and force. And in like manner, “the sensible things (or visible signs which religion hath hallowed) are resemblances framed according to things spiritually understood, whereunto they serve as a hand to lead, and a way to direct.”

Neither let it be said, that “*to add* to such religious duties any significant ceremonies, is to institute *new sacraments* ;” for the persons who sometimes put forward this plea, afford the best answer to it by their own practice ; inasmuch as their own ceremony of imposition of hands they deny to be a sacrament ; but say that it is “a solemn reminding” of the person, that he was separated to the work of the Lord.

Some significant ceremonies are, indeed, sacraments, but only those which are signs and tokens of some *promised grace* of God, really given to those that duly receive them. Others are *no* sacraments. But

¹ Gen. xxiv. 2.

yet, though not sacraments, some may (to use the objectors' own phrase) be "*as sacraments*"¹.

II. *Our Ceremonies accused of departing from ANCIENT SIMPLICITY, and being too pompous.*

Now ceremonies may be disputed, either as to their number or their character. And it is objected, that we have departed in the character of ours, from the simplicity of primitive times; that we have more stateliness and orders, than the devout men of old; and that as religion was purest, and the Scripture best understood, in those times, the ceremonies devised since cannot be good; that they had better be rescinded, and matters brought back to ancient discipline.

This rule however is somewhat difficult of execution; inasmuch as we have nowhere any precise account of all the orders and rites of Apostolic times. Some things, indeed, are declared in the Apostles' writings, some incidentally alluded to, and others to be inferentially deduced. But nowhere is there to be found any specific and complete account; neither, indeed, does it seem necessary that *all* the rites then in use should be recorded; so that, in tying the Church to such rites only as are to be found in the Apostles' writings

¹ [Hooker evidently attaches a holiness of character to some of these significant rites; those which he terms "*as sacraments*" have been not unaptly designated *sacramentals*.]—See *Keble's Hooker*.

(and none other will they admit to be apostolical), the objectors lay down a very insufficient and uncertain rule.

Now our *end* ought always to be the same, viz. “the glory of God;” but then the *means* thereunto may vary; and some rites and orders may be more available at one time than at another. There is no occasion now, for instance, to assemble *secretly* as in primitive times; nor to baptize in brooks and rivers; nor that the Eucharist should be administered in the evening; nor that ministers should be dependant on voluntary contributions. Hence, change to suit existing circumstances is evidently allowable, even in apostolical practices, provided what is adopted *be not repugnant* thereto.

Indeed, this may be illustrated by a comparison of the different circumstances of the Jews at different periods; in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in Canaan. Their worship of God when slaves, was performed in mean huts; when wanderers, in a tabernacle; when a settled nation, in a magnificently glorious temple.

III. *Our Ceremonies blamed, because being many of them THE SAME as the Church of Rome has.*

It has been made a matter of serious accusation, that all our rites and ceremonies are *Papistical*, and framed after the fashion of the Church of Rome; and that our Church founders were not sufficiently careful

herein, but contented themselves with such discipline as they found in the Romish Church. Whereas, as the objectors allege, “there ought to be no communion or fellowship with papists, neither in doctrine, ceremonies, nor government.” In short, in their view, whatever is Popish, must be utterly done away with; and whatever we have from them, “even if it be not unlawful, and not disagreeing with the word of God,” still, *because* being from them, *must of necessity be abrogated*.

Here then is the point on which we are at issue; inasmuch as we deny any such necessity.

They support their argument by alleging, 1st, That in things not scripturally specified, we ought (according to Augustine) to follow the customs of God’s people and our forefathers, which the Papists are not: 2ndly, That Papists *being heretics*, and so *near* about us, we ought the more diligently to sever ourselves from them, and not adopt any thing belonging to them: for that thus God acted, in reference to the Israelites, in guarding them generally from other nations, but more especially from the idolatrous Egyptians and nearest neighbouring nations, because from their proximity there was greater fear of infection. So that (as they allege) it is even “safer to conform in indifferent rites to Turks at a distance, than to Papists who are near.”

They further allege the decrees of primitive councils, which forbade many rites and ceremonies, merely because they resembled in some points those of heathens; from whom Christians ought to be as much *severed* as possible. And that, in point of fact, as an evil habit is generally cured by adopting a diametrically opposite one; so *utter inconformity* with the Church of Rome is the surest policy our Church can use, to avoid contamination from her. For if there be but the slightest remnant of Papistry, it will insensibly increase and ramify, to the damage of pure religion.

IV. *The objectors by their explanation CONFUTE their own argument.*

It will be as well in the outset to observe, that since our rites and ceremonies are only retained as seeming good and profitable, the better mode would have been for the objectors to show at once, “that all such ceremonies as they would abrogate, either are hurtful to the Church, or that their abolition would be more beneficial to her.” But forasmuch as this would be difficult, they take advantage of the deep-rooted dislike which is entertained against Popery, and endeavour to prejudice men’s minds against the Church of England, by insinuating that some of her ceremonies are *papistical*. Whereas, they themselves, being pressed with the stringency of a question,

“whether it be lawful to use *any* ceremonies such as the Church of Rome doth, although not of special scripture direction,”—to which they dare not give a negative,—*evade* the matter by talking of “such ceremonies as are unprofitable,” or “that as good or better may be established;” in point of fact, thus invalidating their own argument, which went to show that *none* were profitable, but *all* utterly bad.

Here, then, it is reduced to a mere matter of *opinion*, as to what *are* profitable. For, until they can establish a claim as *infallible* judges, their assertion goes for nothing, unless supported by evidence. And when we plead the sanction of long custom and public approbation, for our rites, as being conducive to edification, the *onus probandi* rests upon the objectors; theirs it is to show the contrary, and not to suppose that we must give them up, merely because they presume to brand them as foolish, of their own mere will and fancy.

Now, the objectors admit that they hold some things, in doctrine and discipline, as good, which are yet common to the Church of Rome; but that those things are “perpetual commandments, in whose place no other can come.” Whereas, all other things than those unchangeably fixed by Scripture, we ought “to do away, forasmuch as they are *their* ceremonies.” So that, as was said before, this is the simple question to

be considered, “ Whether it be lawful to use *any* ceremonies such as the Church of Rome does, although not of special Scripture direction.”

V. *An answer to the argument, that in allowing the customs of our Fathers in the Church, we must not admit Popish rites, because Papists are NOT OUR FATHERS.*

WHATEVER the character of the Church of Rome may be, whether those belonging to her be our fathers in the faith or not, is not here material. Neither doth Augustine’s rule apply here, when he says that “ the customs of the people of God and of our forefathers are to be kept, touching those things whereof Scripture has not given us any specific charge.” For it manifestly means no more, than “ if we have *no* divine precept, and *have* a primitive custom, then we are to follow it;” but at the same time, it does not preclude churches from framing such new constitutions as circumstances may require for their own government; nor yet from adopting those of any other churches, even though not our fathers, if they seem profitable; and, therefore, *a fortiori*, we may receive from the Papists what they received from those whom we must acknowledge to have been the people of God and our forefathers, unless we disdain the race of Christ.

VI. *An answer to the assertion, "That the ANALOGY of God's dealings with His people forbids our conformity with Popish rites."*

THE rites, however, wherein we follow the customs of the Romish Church are, after all, only of the *same kind* as the Church of Geneva doth follow them in¹. So that the argument is not as to principle, but merely *extent*; we having followed more largely. Hence it behoves the objectors to be cautious in their condemnation, lest they inflict a blow where perhaps they intended not, when they say that the Romish Church ought in no respect whatever to be followed,

Very true, Papists are heretics; and also they are our neighbours: but it followeth not, therefore, that no rite of theirs is to be followed, if not forbidden in Scripture. And as to the argument, whereby they support this position, "that God severed his people from the heathens, and especially from the Egyptians, by express prohibitions against the adoption of any of their customs, however innocent in themselves, either as to habits of dress, or articles of food; and therefore the same is of equal force between Protestants and Papists:" it may be replied that their argument in the first place, is not quite certain. It does not seem

¹ The use of wafer-cakes, and of godfathers and godmothers, for instance, in the two Sacraments.

clear in a perusal of the prohibitions¹, that God forbade them to imitate them in *every* thing without exception; it would seem rather, on a careful perusal, that He limited the prohibition to an imitation in such things as were *repugnant* to the ordinances, and statutes, and laws which He had given; and particularly against any thing connected with idolatry. And the Egyptians and Canaanites are specially mentioned, because amongst the one nation they *had* resided, and amongst the other they were *about* to do so. So that in things indifferent, it would seem there was no prohibition with reference to them, more than to other nations.

Indeed, on examination, we find that some things specially forbidden, such as rounding the corners of the hair, cutting of the flesh, and making bald parts upon the head, were *not* so forbidden, because being in themselves indifferent, they were *used by heathens*; but because they were *contrary to the law*, as being tokens of that immoderate sorrow for the dead, with which they sorrow “who have no hope.” And as to other things, such as that no garment of mixed linen and woollen should be worn²; as, also, that no swine’s flesh should be eaten³; though they seem indifferent, and we have no particular knowledge *why* they were

¹ Lev. xxviii. 3.² Lev. xix. 19.³ Deut. xiv. 7.

forbidden¹; yet there may have been some reasons, beyond the mere fact that they were practices of the heathens. For in reference to the latter, surely they ate the flesh of other animals, sheep for instance; and yet if one was forbidden to the Jews merely on that ground, why not the other!

Hence, even if the Church of Rome were to us as the Egyptians and Canaanites were to Israel, the argument from analogy would not hold, that we should abstain from things indifferent, simply because Papists use them.

VII. *An answer to the example of ELDER CHURCHES herein.*

WITH respect to the alleged cautions of the primitive Churches, that in framing of their rules, “they always had in view a sort of line of demarcation between heathens and themselves;” it may be remarked, that blindly to follow those whose judgment generally is unsound, and their practice evil, is unquestionably wrong. We have the advantage of superior light, and better examples in our Church, than they. And yet, it is not under every circumstance evil, simply to concur with heathens either in opinion or action; but

¹ It seems, however, that this particular sort of garment was worn by heathens in honour of certain of their deities; and hence it was forbidden as connected with idolatry.

only when we follow them in that wherein they do amiss; or generally adopt their customs merely from the force of imitation, without any peculiar assignable reason; inasmuch as we seem thereby to give unto them a universal sort of approbation.

Indeed, Augustine evinceth this, in his answer to Faustus the Manichee, who objected that many of the Christian rites were analogous to heathen ceremonies, in their having temples, offerings, altars, priests, &c. He replied, that the Christians did not hold the same things as heathens, simply because *the heathens held them*; but because, from the very nature of the case, such things must of necessity be common to both.

And whenever the primitive Church seemed to object to conformity in things indifferent, it arose from the peculiar circumstances of the times, wherein it was necessary for the faith and constancy of disciples to be clearly evinced, and held even above the slightest suspicion; *e. g.* when they forbade Christians to decorate their houses with boughs, as the pagans did, on their festivals; lest there should be even the *semblance* of conformity with their idolatrous practices.

Were this not so, and were the argument of the objectors sound, that the Church did forbid such things merely because idolaters have practised them; then it would follow, that we should be blameable

now, for decking our houses, sending gifts, or holding feasts on such days as the heathens do; and the rule would hold, were we never so far disjoined, in time and place, from them.

And as to the assertion, that when the children of God and Belial are *near* neighbours, a more stringent line of demarcation is necessary; and that in fact we ought to guard against imitating the ceremonies of Papists, because of their nearness, more carefully even than against those of the Turks: this seems to be utterly wrong. Surely the infection of Turkish or heathenish principles would be worse than that of Papistry. The Papists are much nearer to us *in Christ*, than Turks are; indeed, we were once a *part* of them: and when, through God's good Spirit, we reformed ourselves from them and from their corruptions, it was our duty rather to seek *their* reformation in such things, than by absolute severance from them because of things indifferent, to prejudice them so as to prevent our future usefulness in that respect. As Judah might, in things indifferent, choose conformity with Israel rather than with pagans, so might we with Papists, rather than with Turks.

VIII. *It is not our best policy, as alleged, to have NO AGREEMENT at all with the Church of Rome herein.*

BUT to resume. They allege that *extreme* contra-

riety is our best safeguard against the infection of Popery. Whereas, we think that, as in natural disorders, any sudden violent contrariety may be fatal, so here it is rather by *properly-applied* contrariety, that the evil is to be cured.

We may carry our prejudices herein to an evil extent; as the Arians did, who from their utter antipathy, imagined that Papists could not entertain a sound belief in *any* religious doctrine; and hence that their notion of the *Trinity* was an antichristian corruption! and that the Pope's *triple* crown was the mark of the mystical beast in the Revelation, in no respect more than this, that he maintained the doctrine of the Trinity.

Hence, it requires skill to know and point out *where*, and to what *extent*, Popish corruptions exist; for that they do exist grievously, we admit. But, though a corruption pervades all their ordinances, yet a judicious discernment is necessary, to distinguish accurately in the matter.

And with those amongst whom there is judgment, nevertheless a difference exists, whether in the excision of the unsound portions of Romish practices, those things that are indifferent should be also taken away, so that no rite or ceremony remain but such as are recognized in Scripture. Those that maintain this, which we think extreme, allege that an extreme oppo-

site is the only cure; even as a crooked stick must be bent to an extreme on the opposite side, in order to reduce it to straightness. Whereas, this very simile would lead us to infer, from analogy, that *after a time*, when the object was accomplished, we might come back to that middle state of moderate conformity which they so strongly object to.

IX. *We are not to abolish our Ceremonies, merely because Papists allege, that we have BORROWED FROM THEM; or because of any VAIN HOPES which they may hence entertain.*

As to the boasted assertion of the Romish Church, that we were obliged to *prop up* our religion by the aid of their rites; it is of no weight as an argumentative objection against our Church-independence, inasmuch as the ceremonies we retain from them did not belong to them *solely* as a separate sect, but were ancient rites common to the whole Church of Christ, and a sort of *common property* to all.

Nor yet, is the alleged hope of Papists themselves, that by retaining some of their rites we may eventually be drawn back to them, of any avail. We trust our sound judgment and experience will ever be a safeguard against this. In the exercise of a sober and undistempered discretion, we selected certain rites, which seemed calculated to promote God's glory, and the

good of His Church; not rejecting them merely because Papists might glory therein. Indeed, we envy them not this gratification, provided that we may retain what we think thus profitable.

Again, though on some occasions Popery, for want of utter extirpation, is said to have sprouted again; yet of two evils we would choose the least, and after all, rather run this remote risk (as seems to us) than by utter extirpation, to endanger the very existence of our religion itself, and open a way for paganism or utter barbarity.

Neither yet can the objectors prove what they assert, “that the most strenuous upholders of our rites are popishly inclined;” but even if it were so, their assertion may be met by a counter one, viz. “that many who are clamorous for the abrogation of Popish orders,—including, for instance, Episcopacy as one,—are so chiefly from their hope of *spoliation* accruing, and of the overthrow of religion altogether.”

X. The alleged GRIEF OF THE GODLY at our conformity with Popish Rites.

As to the alleged grief of mind which is caused to the godly by our rites, we simply remark, that till they can prove the things wrong in themselves, we should be as much pained by the removal, as they allege they are by the retention of them. And, in-

deed, we might simply point out to them how the Church of Geneva hath the good old Popish rites of godfathers and godmothers, and of wafer-cakes in the Eucharist; which things their godly brethren can put up with there: why should not themselves do it here? and rather in Christian patience possess their souls, than be perpetually harassing us with their fancied grievances!

This would be a much better course: for after all it doth not seem so certain that the infection of Papistry can so much spread, by our merely adopting things from them, indifferent in themselves; and, at all events, it is incumbent on them to show this by fair argument, rather than mere assertion: moreover, to show it, not as a simple possibility (for it were endless to provide for every possible case), but as a *probability*.

Nor yet will their quotation from Jeremiah¹ here apply, which they urge to maintain their axiom, "That the sound Church of Christ must not be like any heretical Church even in things indifferent." Bread, for instance, is prescribed for the Eucharist; but the *kind* of bread is left indifferent. Now, the Papists use unleavened bread, therefore we may not follow them: but the Greek Church useth leavened; and therefore (if their axiom be worth aught) we may

¹ Ch. li. 9.

not follow them: and hence we may not have a Sacrament at all ¹.

XI. *An objection against the alleged JEWISH nature of our Rites.*

HAVING thus disposed of the argument as to its *general* bearing, there are, however, some *specific* points remaining; such as, that some of the rites we have adopted from Papists were either taken by them improperly from the Jewish ordinances, or had a tendency to idolatry; and, therefore, they ought to be removed,—even as Constantine held in respect of keeping of Easter, that Christians ought not therein to follow the Jews: or as the Council of Laodiceæ decreed, that “Christians should not take unleavened bread of the Jews, or communicate with their impiety.”

Now, though the Jews were deadly enemies to Christianity, and therefore least fit to be taken as our patterns; yet there is no absolute prohibition herein as to *every* thing: and though the Jewish ordinances were solemnly abrogated, yet the exact extent to which this reaches is not quite agreed upon; and to those points where it reaches not, there honour is due,

¹ Nor yet can they escape by the plea of *distance* or *nearness*; let them imagine a reformed Church in Venice, where a Greek Church and a Popish one are, and their axiom is destroyed at once.

were it only on the ground of God being originally the author of them.

It is clear that Jewish ordinances had some *natural* obligations in them; such, therefore, were of perpetuity. Their *positive* ones were, by the coming of Christ, rendered either necessary to be abrogated, or remained indifferent; circumcision and sacrifice being of the abrogated ones necessarily. And yet the Apostles did not so teach the absolute abrogation of these latter, but that Jewish Christians might *for a time* continue them. And hence there were fifteen Christian bishops in Jerusalem, of the circumcision, before the Episcopacy of Mark, who was the first that was uncircumcised, in the days of Adrian.

At first, indeed, Jewish Christians imagined that Gentile Christians were bound to observe the whole law; and disputes arose in consequence, that led to a public Council at Jerusalem¹, which determined against it. And when Paul's preaching as to the freedom of the Gentiles herein was misrepresented, as though he held the Jews equally free, he had to appear and clear himself at Jerusalem, before James and others of the Church². Hence we see that Gentiles were not made conformable to Jews in those *positive* things, which were necessarily to cease at Christ's coming.

¹ Acts xxi.

² Acts xxi. 20.

And as to those that were *indifferent*, we find the Apostles only requiring Gentile Christians “to abstain from things offered unto idols, from blood, from things strangled;” binding them in these points rather on account of their convenience and fitness for the Church as it then stood; that they might not give unnecessary offence to the Jewish converts; whilst at the same time the latter were not to lay upon them unnecessary burdens.

It was a commonly received opinion that the sons of Noah had seven precepts given them by God; 1. To have regular government; 2. To worship God; 3. To shun idolatry; 4. Not to permit effusion of blood; 5. To avoid fornication; 6. To commit no rapine; 7. Not to eat flesh with the blood therein. And as the Gentiles were received into the household of faith equally with the Jews, it might seem but reasonable to the Council to bind them to the third, fifth, and seventh of these, being *positive* precepts, which in fact were in force before Moses’ time; whilst to the observance of the others they were bound by *natural* law.

It may, however, be asked, how should the fifth be thus mentioned? Were they not bound by Nature to avoid fornication? Now, perhaps, a little consideration may show, that this term may not mean what it at first sight seems. The Jews, more than other

nations, were accustomed to consider near alliances in blood as impure; and an incestuous marriage is termed by St. Paul, fornication¹. As the "abstaining from blood" might be taken to avoid *shedding* of blood, but in this place we know it only means *eating* blood; so the phrase, "avoiding of fornication" being thus mentioned along with positive ordinances, may in the same manner mean "marriage within the Jewish prohibited degrees:" and thus all is consistent.

Hence, in some things the Gentiles were to conform to the Jews, and in some not; and some were left indifferent to them.

Many and various have been the controversies in the Christian Church, as to Judaism. Some condemning it absolutely; others considering it as requiring speedy abrogation; others urging it as of perpetual obligation, and this even after the Council of Jerusalem.

To control such slanderers of the Law and the Prophets, however, as the Marcionites and Manichees, our Church in her Liturgy hath intermingled lessons from the Old Testament with those from the New.

Now, the Law, though good, had *an end* in Christ; and yet it had not an end *immediately* on Christ's appearance; the Christian Jews themselves continued their legal services till the temple was destroyed.

¹ 1 Cor. v. 1.

Neither after that, was it so far *bad* (as objectors aver) in itself, that its very names of altar, priest, and sacrifice were therefore to be abolished: they are retained, only under a metaphorical sense, however; our Saviour's functions having been typified by them. And as some *names* are thus lawfully retained, so some *rites* may be, provided they be not specifically abrogated under the Gospel, and be indifferent in themselves.

At the same time, we see by the practice of St. Paul and of the primitive Church, that great caution was exercised to prevent Judaizers from weakening or perverting the great truths of the Gospel; so that, even after the overthrow of the Jewish state, the council of Laodicea, for instance, decreed "From the Jews let not men receive their unleavened (bread) nor communicate with their impieties." From which, when compared with other decrees, we learn, not that Christians were forbidden unleavened bread, simply because used by the Jews, but that they were to be withdrawn from any thing that might, under existing circumstances, lead them to a "communion of faith and fellowship" with them.

Now, that these decrees were not founded either on the belief that we ought not to communicate with Jews, even in things indifferent; or that every portion of their ritual was utterly abrogated, is shown by the

fact, that the framers of them kept Easter according to the Jewish mode of computation, and contrary to the practice of the Western Church : and again, this latter Church used unleavened bread, as the Jews did, being herein opposed to the Eastern one. Had it been otherwise, each Church would have respectively abstained from imitating the Jews in each of these points.

XII. *Another objection, because some of our rites have been ABUSED to Idolatry.*

BUT the gravest objection urged, is against what are said to be *serious scandals*, which have been caused by adopting certain gross abuses from the Church of Rome ; and this requires some investigation.

First, for the term, Scandal : it may be defined to be “any thing that is offensive, whereby men may be encouraged in sin ;” *e. g.* David’s conduct in the matter of Uriah, which was a scandal simply *per se*, and in its own nature. Some things become however, scandals, or matters of offence, *incidentally* ; as some heathen ceremonies which, indifferent in themselves, could not yet be viewed by a condemner of idolatry without dislike. Again, others may become so *constructively*, as it were ; as when, for instance, Eunomian heretics laid the water of baptism on but once, in order to cross the custom of the Trinitarians, who did it thrice.

Now, whereas, it is asserted, that certain ceremonies, as crossing at Baptism, kneeling at the Eucharist, &c., have been grossly abused to evil; the question therefore is, “Whether of necessity they must be removed.” No one will, however, say they are evil, *per se*. Were they then *abused* to evil at their very commencement? Even in this case, we often see that customs, bad in their origin, and once much objected to, have by degrees lost their obnoxious character, and are still retained; *e. g.* the heathenish names of our months, and days of the week: and so, also, religious rites; as, for instance, the Eunomian practice of baptism just referred to.

But this latter objection does not apply to such Romish rites as are most cavilled at; they were *not* originally instituted for evil, but for good; and therefore can only have become evil by perversion. If we then use them to their original good purpose, they cannot be a scandal to ourselves; nor yet to the Papists, who are rather grieved at our apostacy, than encouraged in error by us; nor yet to our opponents, whose anti-Popish feelings are surely a sufficient safeguard against any papistical leaven from them. And if the weakness of some few (and *few* they hence must be) leads them to misconstrue, are we therefore to abolish utterly all such rites, merely on their account?

The objectors reply "Yes," and plead St. Paul's rule of "not abusing our liberty to the injury of a weak brother;" alleging, that as the "eating of meats" was to the weak Jews, so the "use of papistical rites" is, to such weak ones as are above-mentioned.

But the parallel does not hold: 1st, because in proportion of *numbers*; inasmuch as the prejudice was held by the Jews *generally*, whereas in our case it is only by a very few: nor, 2ndly, in *kind*; for eating of meats was to them an affair of *private* concern, whereas rites form a portion of the *public* constitution of the Church. And it is not meet, that what is judged fittest for a whole body, should be abrogated for a few weak dissentients; particularly when the remedy is at hand, of removing their scruples by better light of instruction.

Singularly enough, however, the cavillers against the ceremonies (the particulars whereof will be treated of in the next book) object to men's time being occupied with curing scruples on these points by preaching, when more important matter is before them. If other matters be so much more important, why then do they raise a turmoil, as they have always done, about matters, by their own admission, so unimportant; and represent things as so grievous a snare to men's minds, whereon, after all, it is not worth while to spend time in setting them right?

XIII. *Blame imputed because we follow not the EXAMPLE of Elder reformed Churches.*

LASTLY, we are charged with neglect of Christian duty, in not cherishing a spirit of amity, and conforming to the practice of other Churches that preceded us in the work of reformation, according to St. Paul's directions to the Church of Corinth¹, or that of the council of Nice, in reference to standing at prayers,—“that *one custom* should be kept in all the Churches.” And therefore we ought to discontinue papistical rites, and assimilate ourselves to the practice of reformed Churches, as the younger to the elder.

To the argument of the preservation of peace and unity we willingly defer: the only question is *how far*, and by *what means*? The objectors say, “as much as *possibly* may be:” but this, if taken literally, seems far too stringent a rule, as to things indifferent in themselves, and which after all must be regulated by a certain degree of expediency. Indeed, Augustine admits on this point, that “if there be *unity of faith*, it suffers no let or impediment from a variety of ordinances.” And Calvin actually says, “it sometimes *profiteth* that there be a *difference* of ceremonies, lest

¹ 1 Cor. xvi. 1.

men should think that religion was tied to outward ceremonies."

They who admit that diversity of indifferent rites ought not to breed dissension or schism between Churches, do, by that very admission, destroy all ground of their objections on this head; and prove themselves needless disturbers of Church concord, when they urge a conformity in *all* things, except where an utter impossibility exists.

As to the argument taken from St. Paul's direction, it avails not here; for it merely applies to the collections for the poor being made regularly, as a matter of convenience, not having the slightest bearing upon Church rites. And with reference to the decree of Nice, it maketh for us; inasmuch as there having been a long practice in the Church, during Pentecost and on Sundays, to *stand* at prayers, some few began to alter their custom herein, and to kneel; whereupon they enjoined all to conform in standing posture; clearly showing that the opinion of the Church in general must not be conceded to a few individuals in it.

Since Scripture does not prescribe all particular ceremonies; and so many modes in things indifferent might occur to the natural mind, the only practicable method of procuring uniformity, seems to be, from the deliberate consultation and decision of the Church in

general council hereupon; and not from the utterly impracticable suggestion of Churches mutually adopting from each other, till all come to a similarity.

As to the alleged duty of the later Churches in the Reformation to follow those that led the way, for which they plead St. Paul's argument: the Apostle answers their position himself, saying in effect to the Corinthians¹, "Men instructed in the knowledge of Jesus Christ there were both before you, and are *besides* you in the world;" clearly showing that precedence in time did not confer superiority. Indeed, example can only prevail to *induce*, where other circumstances make indifferent things advisable, but it has no binding power.

Our not choosing to adopt practices of other Churches, by no means, however, proves that we condemn them, no more than it proves us wrong; each may be safely left to the charitable construction of the other.

XIV. *A declaration of the proceedings of the CHURCH OF ENGLAND in establishing her present rites.*

BUT omitting reformed Churches abroad, to consider the Church of England. Resolving to reform her religious constitutions, caution was necessary for her. For though laws may become, in course of

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 36.

time, unsuitable, and necessary to be altered; yet, considering how men become the creatures of custom, the change or abolition even of a useless, or ill-working law, is often attended with inconvenience, and sometimes causes a suspicion of the soundness of those laws that remain, and so far impairs the respect in which they ought to be held.

The change of Laws, however, is admitted to be sometimes necessary. But when the Apostles were commissioned by our Saviour to establish new constitutions of religion, they were supernaturally endowed with wisdom from above to arrange them, and with miraculous powers to convince men of their authority. If we, therefore, have no such directions, we can only proceed to the change of laws upon clear and undeniable proof of its necessity; and not from mere opinion: nor yet even for apparent slight advantages, lest the remedy prove even more hurtful than the disease.

Hence our Reformers prudently resolved only to cut off at first such things as might be well spared; retaining the residue either partially to fall into desuetude by time, or to be retained, as circumstances might show expedient.

And in doing this they determined that the least needful, and those of latest introduction, should be first rescinded, as saints'-days, &c. By degrees, our

liturgy, articles, canons, and catechisms being framed, and the Church purged of idle and burdensome ceremonies, all was brought to that happy condition wherein we now stand. Yet in thus acting, they have not, however, escaped (what man can?) the censure of the self-opinionated, because, forsooth, they did not in hasty zeal pluck up root and branch, and change even those customs, which being established in primitive times, had received the sanctions both of councils and of time !

It is true, that in indifferent things, no antiquity or council can sanction what may prove inexpedient, so as to prevent the Church from abrogating it. At the same time, till they be abolished by proper authority, it might be well to submit to their observance. And it would have been an unwise proceeding in our Reformers, through blind hatred of papal superstition, to tear up the most indifferent things merely from having the *name* of papistical, though of never so long and revered continuance ; and even as some zealots would have it to have adopted Turkish ceremonies in preference !

But God Almighty providentially endued them with wisdom and right understanding herein, and saved us from those consequences of extreme measures, arising from violence on the one hand, and desperation on the other, which other States have experienced ;

and which after all ended in what had better have been at first, viz. a General Consultation as to what might be best for all. And herein is the wisdom of their proceedings shown the more clearly, by contrasting the troubled state of Foreign Churches with the happy one of our own.

How much better then is it, to exercise forbearance of Christian charity, than to raise the turmoil of hot controversy herein: and to be warmly thankful to that Providence, which, when Superstition had risen to its utmost height, raised up His own instruments, to work out, through various difficulties, and amidst sundry interruptions, the glorious REFORMATION, after so wise and godly a fashion, that we cannot but perceive the applicability of the words of Zacharias therein, “Neither by an army, nor strength, but by *my Spirit*, saith the Lord of Hosts¹!”

¹ Zach. iv. 6.

BOOK V.

CONCERNING THE FOURTH ASSERTION, “THAT WITH RESPECT TO THE SEVERAL PUBLIC DUTIES OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION, THERE IS AMONGST US MUCH SUPERSTITION RETAINED IN THEM: AND THAT WITH RESPECT TO THE PERSONS ENDUED WITH THE POWER OF ECCLESIASTICAL ORDER FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THOSE DUTIES, OUR LAWS AND PROCEEDINGS ARE MANY WAYS CORRUPT.”

I. *True Religion is the root of all true VIRTUE, and the stay of all well-ordered COMMONWEALTHS.*

Few there are but can easily espy public evils, and fewer that patiently refrain from complaint, if those evils touch them somewhat. The cure of them, however, requires skill and experience; and the office is so invidious, that many naturally shrink from it. Notwithstanding, we shall endeavour, with God's blessing, to vindicate our Church ceremonies, not arguing for victory over our opponents, but giving reasonable explanations and vindications of what they, from misconception perhaps, complain against.

First, then, we lay it down as a general principle, that “pure Religion ought to be the chief object and

care in public Polity." All duties are so much the better performed in proportion as the agents, whether governors or subjects, are endued with the fear of God, and aided by His grace¹.

Religion is so intimately the parent of Justice, that neither can properly exist without the other. It is likewise the parent of Prudence, by the experience afforded, in men's conscientious endeavours to assist their fellow men; as it is also of Fortitude, from the conscious sense of God's providential care and love for them in well-doing. And, indeed, if religion did but thoroughly imbue the hearts of all, no other restraint against evil would be necessary.

It will be proper here, however, to meet an erroneous maxim sometimes put forth, "that it mattereth little *what* the religion be, inasmuch as all, even Turks and Heathens, attribute similar results from their religions, as we from ours:" though at the same time they all admit, that it is every one's duty to seek and adopt that which is *true*.

Now, whatever good arose from the belief of superstitious notions in false religions of old (and we admit that good did arise²) was only because of the *influence*

¹ For more on this point, see Section 76.

² The doctrine of Transmigration of Souls, for instance, abated the fear of death on certain occasions; the hope arising from auspices, caused courage to spring forth; the fear of punishment from the gods they invoked caused a reverence for oaths.

of those great Truths of pure Natural Religion which were *intermixed* with their other fables and fancies; and which worked more effectually in some hearts than others, so that they were lights in their day and generation.

Hence the purer the religion is, the worthier will be the results produced in those that embrace it. And it seems the truest and best wisdom, in all Commonwealths, to honour and take her as their chief stay.

II. *The extreme OPPOSITE to True Religion is pretended Atheism.*

Few there are whose faculties are so limited as not to be *able* to comprehend a GOD. And yet, miserable as we might consider them, those are still more so, who from depravity of heart, *set themselves against* such a comprehension, and perversely strive to shut out Him who would be the avenger of their sinfulness.

With such perverse ones it is not often of use to argue; indeed, it is generally their custom not to use reasonable discussion, but rather by contemptuous scoffing, to overbear the voice of truth: and, therefore, they must be left generally to the working of their own guilty fears, which, notwithstanding their boasts, do nevertheless pursue them.

To such atheistical persons our *controversial* dis-

putes are often matter of rejoicing, as serving to confirm their unsound notions. Whilst at the same time, from our considering the first principles of religion as a settled thing, and not being always *ready* with proofs thereupon, when they suddenly demand them, they imagine religion to be but as an error, propagated and supported by the wiser sort amongst the multitude, for politic purposes only. For they perceive that its sanctions, operating upon the heart, are far more effectual than mere positive laws of man.

Indeed some ¹, acting on this unsound imagination, have counselled the upholding religion in every way, even by adopting fraud and contrivance, and superstitions, merely as for the good and stability of the State; herein overshooting themselves, for they admit that when the Gentiles began to discover the falsehood of their own superstitions, their hearts were utterly averted. And hence, their godless devices, by their own showing, would tend ultimately to a State's ruin.

III. *Of SUPERSTITION; arising from misguided Zeal or ignorant Fear.*

THERE are others, however, of an opposite description to Atheists, viz. the *Superstitious*, whose religious

¹ Machiavel.

feelings are of a two-fold character, either as they spring from zeal or fear. *Zeal*, unless tempered with sober discretion, pursues its object with such an eager impetuosity as well nigh to root up religion altogether. *Fear*, in its excess, destroys all right judgment, and leads to a frenzy of perplexity. Hence, each of them is a dangerous principle to adopt. And from them springs that erroneous worship of God which leads to idolatry on the one hand, or to an over scrupulous exactness on the other, as either of these principles happens to prevail ¹.

Superstition is, indeed, an insidious evil, and creepeth on often by imperceptible degrees, so that, even as weeds grow rankest in rich grounds, the first principles of it have originated in what no one could have condemned, but rather applauded as good in itself.

IV. *The charge of SUPERSTITION investigated.*

LEAVING, however, the general consideration of this matter, as applicable to other places, we turn to the charges against the Church of England; and these in truth have been made with no light or sparing

¹ *Superstitions* seem to have been more abundant in the Western Church; and *Heresies* in the Eastern: the subtle refined wits of the latter leading them to curious and nice speculations in doctrine; whilst the former ran into grosser matters of superstitious practice.

hand; insomuch, that almost every thing connected with her worship,—her prayers, sacraments, rites, and ordinances, have all been accused as tainted with superstition.

And though wise and strong-minded men might not consider this of much consequence, knowing the proneness of mankind to find fault; yet it may be well to expose and confute the charge, for the sake of others who are not so skilful or experienced, lest they should be made to waver.

The great object, then, of rites and ordinances is, that God's worship may be rightly and fittingly conducted. Now, worship may be divided into the *reasonable*, or internal, as between God and a man's conscience; and the *serviceable*, as connected with the external forms of the Church as a public society. And again, this latter may be distinguished into *principal* rites as divinely instituted, and *inferior* or indifferent ones, as being of human ordinance. In these latter it is, that we have been charged as acting superstitiously and improperly.

V. FOUR POSTULATES *laid down, as principles of argumentation.*

NOW in all argumentative processes, it is usual to mention certain pre-requisites called *postulates*, as commonly-admitted principles, wherefrom to conduct the argument; and the objectors themselves have done this in their charges, as, *e. g.* "That sound religion may not use the things uncommanded of God, that have been abused to superstition," or "That nothing should be undecently or unorderly done;" and others of a like nature. We, therefore, following this reasonable method, shall lay down four propositions, or *postulates*, such as may be fairly considered more precise than those above-mentioned.

VI. *The FIRST Postulate.*

THE first thing that moves us to approve of any services is, their intrinsic reasonableness, or adaptation to produce the end sought. True religion then, being a thing of the sublimest consideration, and most solemn importance, affecting man's heart and conscience, and influencing his happiness, ought to be manifested by suitable external conduct; and the public service of the Church ought to correspond in some measure to the dignity of Him we worship; the sign thus resembling the thing signified. Hence, the

first postulate is, “That in the externals of religion, such things as are or seem most effectual to set forward godliness,—either from considerations of God’s greatness, or the dignity of religion, or heavenly impressions on men’s minds,—ought to be reverently esteemed.”

VII. *The SECOND Postulate.*

IN the next place, the voice of antiquity, and the long-continued practice of the Church ought to be regarded. With the aged and experienced generally, is prudence and understanding; so that, as a wise one amongst the heathens pronounced, “the judgments of men experienced, aged, and wise, even though they speak without demonstration, are no less to be hearkened to, than as being demonstrations in themselves.” And when the experience of *generations* of the wise, therefore, comes in addition, the authority thereof must be still weightier, and ought to have a still greater claim upon our reverent attention. Love of antiquity argueth *staidness*; but fondness for innovation, levity, and rashness. Hence we lay down as a *second postulate*, “That in things whose fitness is not of itself apparent, nor may be easily proved, the concurrent judgment of antiquity ought to prevail with those who cannot allege any weighty impropriety against them.”

VIII. *The THIRD Postulate.*

BUT all things cannot be of *ancient* establishment ; and a power is required to ordain new things, as circumstances may call for. This power evidently must be in the Church, as a body ; even as such things are regulated in all civil bodies of men. Not, however, for matters of *Doctrine* (as has been falsely objected to us),—for that remaineth ever the same ; but in matters of *order* and *discipline*. What Scripture directs, is a matter of imperative duty : what reason evidently deduces therefrom, comes next : and what the voice of the Church declareth, in the absence of Scripture injunction, ought to overrule all inferior judgments : and this evidently, on all principles of social propriety. Hence, the *third postulate* is, “ That where no law divine, nor invincible reasoning argument, nor notorious public injury, maketh against what the Church hath instituted, even though it be but recently, her authority ought to weigh more than any *mere opinion* to the contrary ; and to claim deference, especially from her own children.”

IX. *The FOURTH Postulate.*

ALL human things, however, are *mutable*, and ancient ordinances may, from change of circumstances, become unsuited ; yea, matters of apostolic practice,

and even those of divine institution, may be, on certain occasions, dispensed with, without blame¹, after the example of the Saviour himself. In civil affairs, matters of urgent necessity have ever been regarded as causes of dispensing with general rules; and so it must be in religious ones. General laws are analogous to those of medicinal remedies, which in ordinary cases avail; but may even be hurtful in extraordinary ones. Hence, in every State, certain immunities and privileges, and exceptions are occasionally made; and the rules of equity are allowed to supersede those of strict law: and thus in the Church, as to the matters of holy ordinances, we should also be regulated.

But, whereas men are not good judges in their own cause, nor at all proper to pronounce upon the occasions of their own exemptions, there must be some just, competent, and responsible authority, whereon the decision thereof must rest. This, as to the Church, cannot be in the Popes; for they are or profess to be irresponsible: but only in those persons whom the Law appoints with a certain discretionary power, as the responsible administrators of its own provisions. Hence the *fourth postulate* is, "That in cases of necessity, or for common utility's sake, certain ordinances profitable in themselves, may occasionally be relaxed."

¹ Luke vi. 4.

X. *Men's PRIVATE JUDGMENT not a safe rule.*

IF, then, against those things wherein the Word of God leaves the Church to determine in her own discretion,—or against matters of ancient practice and authoritative ordinances,—the *private judgment* may be set up, and men be at liberty to adopt or reject, according to the variable humour of a warm or enthusiastic mind, what else but serious mischief must ensue? The gifts of spiritual wisdom which they pretend to herein, ought rather to lead them to Christian peace and charity; otherwise it is to be suspected as a spirit of delusion, unless it be accompanied with the further gift of miraculous demonstration, or at least of undeniably cogent and sound reasoning, whereby others may be at once convinced.

And now, from general rules, we turn to particulars.

XI. *Of PLACES for Public Worship.*

SOLEMN public services must have some regular suitable place wherein to be performed. Adam in Paradise seems to have had a place whereat “to present himself before the Lord¹”; as the sons of Adam also had, whither to bring their sacrifices²: the Patriarchs had altars, and other places³. In the wilderness, the Israelites, though journeying, had a divinely-appointed

¹ Gen. iii. 8.

² Gen. iv. 3.

³ Gen. xiii. 4; xxii. 1.

Tabernacle ; and when settled in Jerusalem, an equally solemnly-appointed and glorious Temple, even at “the place where the Lord their God did choose ¹.” And after their return from captivity a second one was reared, in the place of the first that had been destroyed. Moreover, they had Synagogues for ordinary worship. And both these were sanctioned by the attendance there of the SAVIOUR himself, and his Apostles.

Primitive Christians, however, being excluded from power, were obliged in the first instance to assemble in private places, for fear of persecution. By degrees, as their numbers increased, they were permitted to erect humble spots called Oratories ; and at length, when the hearts of kings, by God’s grace, were turned to Christian truth, Temples were erected, with such cost and splendour, as might redound at once to the glory of God, by an exhibition of largeness of heart on the part of His worshipping people. But what alas, in their days, and up to this present time, had always been thought noble and praiseworthy, hath lately been called in question ; and we who worship in the very churches which their hands made, or which have been built after their model, are taxed with the sin of superstitious idolatry, and the Churches themselves have been maliciously termed temples of Baal !

¹ Deut. xii. 5

XII. *Solemnities in the ERECTION and DEDICATION of Churches defended.*

AMONGST the first things that move this spirit of accusation, are the solemnities usual at their Dedication. There does not, however, seem any impropriety in a public ceremony, at the first erection and setting apart of a building for God's service; it is only a natural expression of reverence. It is also a sort of public notification of the entire surrender of right on the part of former owners, so that it cannot ever be reclaimed as private property; as it is also of the solemn public uses whereunto it is to be reserved.

Hence, we have the example of Solomon in his dedication of the first Temple; and of Ezra at the rebuilding thereof after the Captivity. And our Saviour seems to have urged the consideration of the Temple being a sanctified place, in his conduct to profaners of it¹. The Apostle's expression² also, "Have ye not houses to eat and drink in," evidently makes a distinction between private houses, and that of God. Thus, therefore, we find, when Christianity had made progress, that Constantine had a solemn dedication of a Church at Jerusalem; and Athanasius records a similar instance on the part of a Bishop of Alexandria.

¹ Matt. xxi. 13; Mark xi. 16.

² 1 Cor. xi. 22.

We, therefore, dedicate or hallow Churches to testify that we thereby make them places of public worship, surrender them to God, and sever them from common uses. And if it be objected that idolaters do the same in respect to their temples, we reply that it is not impossible for them, in *some* external matters of God, to judge and act rightly.

XIII. *Of the NAMES given to our Churches.*

NEITHER are the *names* given to our Churches, after saints and angels, superstitious. The very name “Church,” does of itself signify “*the Lord’s House* :” and for distinction’s sake, other names are appended, as those of Trinity, the Virgin, or the Apostles. But herein “nothing is done (as Augustine saith) save in the way of *simple memorial* of dead men, whose spirits with God are still living ;” sometimes in memorial of holy martyrs, sometimes of pious Christian benefactors. And even if the practice had been founded in superstition (which it clearly was not),—yet in these days at least, no use is kept, beyond that of mere *distinction* ; just as we use heathenish names of days and months, without attaching any superstitious idea to the practice.

XIV. *Of the FASHION of our Churches.*

NOR yet is there validity in the objection, that our

Churches are *fashioned* after the pattern of the Jewish Temple. In many points they are not; and, indeed, the only one which seems to hold, is that of their being divided into body and chancel; and that was done originally for a particular distinction, little observed now, between clergy and laity.

XV. *Of the alleged SPLENDOUR of our Churches.*

NEITHER is the alleged *splendour* of our Churches really objectionable. It is a sign of our grateful feeling, to adorn the house of God, in proportion to our means, and the circumstances of the times. And though true was the saying of the Fathers, “The best temples that we can dedicate to God, are our sanctified souls and bodies;” yet that answer was only given to an upbraiding made against them, of the *meanness* of their places of worship, which, through lack of ability to build better, they were obliged to put up with. And when times brightened with primitive Christians under Maximinus, they were filled with joy to restore their ruined churches, “reared up to a height immeasurable, and adorned with far more beauty in their restoration, than their founders before had given them.” The Temple under the Law was sumptuously magnificent; and it seems but a natural expression of our pious gratitude and sense of God’s majesty (as

David intimates ¹, to employ things most excellent for His service, rather than those that are mean and base. It is a poor objection, that the money might be expended in charity; to which we may simply reply, "God, who requireth the one as necessary, accepteth the other as honourable."

XVI. *Of the imputed SANCTITY of our Churches.*

THE public worship of God being the end whereunto Churches serve, they have consequently a *sacred character* attached to them. And though in reference to God, true worship is acceptable in whatever place it is offered; yet in respect of ourselves, the very majesty and holy dignity of His house have a sensible effect, in exciting devout and holy feelings. Hence we consider the Church as the fittest place "wherein to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

XVII. *Churches not to be RAZED on the allegation of having been abused to Idolatry.*

NEITHER is the reasoning sound whereby it is maintained, that because our Churches were once *abused* to purposes of idolatry, they were not fit for future worship, but ought to have been utterly destroyed; even as under the Law God directed all places of idolatrous worship in Canaan to be razed to

¹ 1 Chron. xxviii. 14; 2 Chron. ii. 5.

the ground. Idolatry is a grievously heinous sin, and pollutes all within its influence ; at the same time, mere *things* which have been abused therein, having no moral guilt, do not require in themselves destruction. Besides our case as respects idolaters, and that of the Israelites as respected the Canaanites, are not *parallel*. They were in peculiar circumstances, appointed by God as His special instruments for exterminating a grossly sinful people, with whom they were forbidden to hold intercourse ; and all those places connected with their idolatries were to be utterly razed, whilst they themselves were to worship God in *one place only*, where-to they were to bring all their offerings and sacrifices¹. But it does not follow that this rule is applicable to all times and all people : that *we* are to have no leagues and truces with superstitious or heathen people, but put them to the sword ! As then, notwithstanding the precept for the extermination of the Canaanites, idolaters may be converted and live ; so, albeit places may have been abused to idolatry, they may be purified, and remain undestroyed, serving a better purpose for the future.

On these grounds, we hold to our *dedication* of Churches ; defend the holy *names* given them, their *form*, and their suitable *magnificence* ; not thinking their previous superstitious *abuse* any obstacle to our using them for a reformed, pure, and spiritual service.

¹ Deut. xii. 5.

XVIII. *Of Public Teaching, or PREACHING; the first mode is by CATECHISMS.*

THE service, as just mentioned, is a mutual conference and communion between God and ourselves. The true knowledge of God is the basis of all real happiness; and it is the chief object, therefore, of all religious offices, to impart it by a public Proclamation of His Word, called, by way of eminence, *Preaching*.

This instruction by Preaching, however, has several modes, suited to the different circumstances of those taught. The first is by way of *Catechisms*, or an inculcation of elementary principles, suited to young beginners, compendiously drawn up from the Scriptures themselves, and publicly taught and explained.

XIX. *A second mode of Preaching, is by Public READING of the SCRIPTURES.*

A SECOND mode is by *public reading of Holy Writ*; after the same manner as the Law was preached to the Jews of old, in that "it was read every Sabbath day¹." Hence our Church appoints the Word to be read publicly, by way of testimony or witness to the truths she teaches; and as fidelity is necessary in a witness, so it is necessary, the Scriptures being written in what are now dead languages,

¹ Acts xv. 21.

that the translations thereof should be faithful. And herein *our* Version may well be considered as such; giving the mind of Scripture, with neither corrupt interpretations on the one hand, nor falsified additions on the other. And the reading thereof is wisely appointed at such a period of the service, as that all may have an opportunity of hearing it for themselves.

XX. *A third mode of Preaching is by reading the*
APOCRYPHAL BOOKS, and HOMILIES.

BESIDES the Canonical Scriptures, our Church doth also read portions of others, called *Apocryphal*, calculated for practical improvement, and elucidation of Scripture itself. This has been objected to, on the plea that “under the Law nothing was used, but what was specially hallowed; and, that when the Jews were forbidden sermons under Antiochus, they did not presume to read the writings of any Paraphrasts, but confined themselves to the reading of the Law and the Prophets.” But, herein we answer that the peculiar dispensation under which the Jews were, forms no parallel case for us. Nor yet, if the primitive Church read none other than the Scriptures, are we precluded from the practice, unless there be some law of God or of reason forbidding it.

At the same time it may be observed, that the

primitive Church gave the name of “Ecclesiastical” to what we call “Apocryphal,” and used to read lessons from the Old Testament, from the New Testament, and also from books called Ecclesiastical, such as the writings of Clement, Hermas, &c. It has been found profitable, after long experience, and had not the effect of excluding the Scriptures, which are always largely read from, in our liturgy.

Homilies are also used as a third mode of Preaching; being, in fact, a commendable method of supplying the want of sermons, used in former times as well as the present.

There was, in early days of Christianity, another mode in use, viz. that of relating publicly the sufferings and actions of Saints and Martyrs; which was particularly suited to that period, as a help to confirm the minds of those who lived in times of persecution. But whereas this practice degenerated in subsequent periods, into the invention of improbable popish legends, and other follies, it has been wisely discontinued. It does not, however, follow that others, such as Homilies or Ecclesiastical Books, should therefore be given up.

Besides, all men are so fully aware that Apocryphal or Ecclesiastical Books are *not* Canonical, that there need be no fear of their being confounded with Scripture. Moreover, they have generally been con-

sidered by the Church as being excellent, albeit there may be an occasional spot and blemish in them: and it would be foolish to deprive ourselves of the sterling gold they contain, merely because it may be occasionally mixed with dross. And hence we read the books of Judith, Tobit, Baruch, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus publicly, for the edification of the Church; leaving the others for the private reading of those that choose it.

XXI. *Preaching by SERMONS not the ONLY way of teaching saving Truths.*

It may, however, be less matter of surprise, that the reading of books not canonical, should be objected to by some, when even the reading of Scripture itself has fallen into such neglect by them, that it is considered doubtful whether it be even an ordinary means of salvation, either read publicly or privately. In fact they have restricted the word *Preaching*, to the public exposition thereof by the living voice of a speaker applying it to his hearers; or, in other words, that nothing but *Sermons* may be called preaching, and those not gravely composed, but delivered *extemporaneously*, and wherein there is no opportunity of marking how they coincide with the Word of God.

Now *Apostolic* sermons were indeed as *Scripture* to those hearing them; but not so *ours*, which are only

to be gathered out of Scripture, and therefore Scripture is to us the *only* Word of God ; and in that limitation the term will herein be used by us.

The object of the Word of God is to give salvation, and hence it is called the word of *life*. This life eternal being offered to all, it is highly necessary that all should be put in the way of its attainment ; and, to this end, the Word *serveth* as a doctrinal instrument, or instructive guide, which *saveth* by making “ wise unto salvation ; ” hence those ignorant of it cannot be saved by it. Now this Word being an instrument appointed by God Himself, to work the knowledge of salvation in the hearts of men, may well be thought *fitted* to accomplish its object, for enlightening the mind in divine things, and winning the heart to their reception ; for giving all necessary knowledge, and disclosing every truth tending to everlasting happiness. Being *God’s* acknowledged Word, it thereby demands, as His Word, our implicit faith.

This knowledge, however, like all other knowledge, requireth at first some sort of guidance, to bring men acquainted therewith. And hence every method of making known the truths of Scripture, and thereby bringing men into the way of life, whether publicly or privately, is an *ordinary means* of salvation, which is not confined to sermons only.

In the ancient church, the public reading of the

Gospels, or that of a lesson from Scripture, was called *preaching* ; and, indeed, men may preach with their pens, as well as with their tongues ; and the apostles preached as well when they *wrote*, as when they *spoke*, the Gospel of Christ. Hence our public reading of their writings for the instruction of the people, is in every sense a proclamation or Preaching of the Word of God. We only argue however thus with those who contend *exclusively* for public expositions or *Sermons* ; for we admit that *every* method of administering God's Word (accompanied with His influential Spirit) is a means of salvation.

XXII. *Comparative EFFECTS of Sermons and Scriptural Lessons.*

AND hence, in respect of preaching by sermons, we by no means derogate from it, but admit its great usefulness and efficaciousness, as a blessed ordinance of God ; only we resist the arguments whereby the public reading of Scripture is sought to be depreciated.

For it may be in the first place observed, that besides the *direction* given by St. Paul, for his epistles to be read¹, in former times a great difficulty existed in obtaining the Word, when it could only be had by ex-

¹ 1 Thess. v. 27. Coloss. iv. 16.

pensive written copies; and therefore the providing proper copies by the Church, and the *public reading* thereof, contributed as well to diffuse the knowledge of them, as also to keep them incorrupt. Next, this practice affords also an evident authentication of the Scriptures themselves, that they are *the same* which have ever been received and acknowledged in the Church. And also it furnishes the hearers with Scripture matter and knowledge, whereby to form a sort of test or standard of the soundness of sermons themselves.

The objectors admit this reading may be beneficial, as an aid, *after* a religious principle has been planted; but that it is not effectual to *originate* the good work. We find¹, however, that the simple reading of the Law had a very striking effect upon the Israelites of old, in working repentance after transgression; as we know also that God appointed the reading of the Law, that men might “learn to fear the Lord;” and we also know that the Saviour intimated as much, with reference to the “hearing of Moses and the Prophets².”

And though many may hear, and yet *heed* not, still this does not invalidate the argument, inasmuch as with hardened hearts the obstinacy may be the same under *every* method. At the same time we do not con-

¹ 2 Chron. xxxiv. 18, et seq.

² Luke xvi. 31.

tend for this simple reading to be so effectual for the conversion of *infidels* ; but for those brought up in the bosom of the Church, it is surely no mean instrument for salvation.

In this respect, the *Works* and the *Word* of God are very different; the bare contemplation and perusal, as it were, of the works of creation, is not calculated to produce faith, because they reveal none of the mysteries thereof; but as the Scriptures reveal them all on acknowledged divine authority, they must necessarily have a very different effect. And, as reading of Scripture conveys to the mind the entire inspired truth, the ultimate object of which is salvation through faith, so he that readeth what is written by inspired men, for that special end, may well be presumed to take a most effectual way of attaining it.

Now, in maintaining their point about the superiority of sermon-preaching, the objectors, after all, act somewhat singularly; they say that reading of Scripture is profitable as an *adjunct* to sermons, in preparing men's minds for the reception of truth and helping them to remember it: thus perverting the Gospel to be a mere subsidiary, as it were, to sermons, and entirely omitting that the main object of the Gospel was, that it should be *preached upon*, and interpreted by competently appointed teachers.

Faith proceeds from two operations of the mind,

apprehension and *assent*. Some things are so plain as to be apprehended at once, without explanation, and others not so; but there are other modes of instructing in divine mysteries, besides sermons. Moreover, the assent of man to the doctrines of life eternal, is won from the *authority* of *Him*, whose words they are. And therefore, unless it can be proved that neither religious education, nor pious converse, nor studious meditation, are effectual to a comprehension of Scripture, and an acknowledgment of its authority, the pretensions of sermonizers fail entirely.

An allegation is brought forward, from the words of St. Paul, "It pleaseth God by the foolishness of *preaching* to save them that believe¹;" and again, where speaking of the conversion of the Gentiles, he saith, "How shall they hear without a *preacher*²?" But this is nothing more than a general direction after all, that the glad tidings of the Gospel must necessarily be made known unto men before they can be converted. The phrase, "foolishness of preaching," adverts not to the *mode*, by discussion or argumentative preaching, (for that the Gentiles were partial to,) but only to the *subject-matter* of their instruction, that is, to salvation through the *knowledge of the cross of Christ*; a doctrine to those only imbued with the wisdom of nature, appearing inconsistent and foolish. This doctrine

¹ 1 Cor. i. 21

² Rom. x. 14.

must, as has been said, be made known, ere it can be received ; but it by no means follows, that sermons are the *only* method of communicating it. If then the argument will not hold, even as to the Gentiles, still less will it in reference to those who have always been in Christian lands, and in the way of hearing Christian truths spoken of continually.

In the same way, they allege other passages of Scripture, putting perverse constructions upon them, so as to make them bend to their own favourite notion of exalting sermons above Scripture itself ; and thus making the wit of man (whence sermons spring) superior to that Word of God, “ which is sharper than any two-edged sword,” and which is “ profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness¹.” Whereas we, following the plain declaration of Holy Writ, maintain that when we read or recite Scripture, we do thereby *properly* deliver to the people the Word of God : and as it is also an ordinance of God’s appointment², we doubt not it will be aided by His blessing.

The difficulties of some passages form no objection against reading the simple and plain ones, which are for the most part abundant, and amply sufficient for salvation unto willing hearers ; for it is not depth of

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

² Deut. xxxi. 12.

knowledge, so much as singleness of belief, which God accepteth.

But the objectors not only thus disparage Scripture, by exalting Sermons above it, and above every other means of grace—above Sacraments and Prayer; but they likewise utterly deny, that the *reading* of Scripture, or Homilies, or Sermons, can ever by the ordinary grace of God save any soul. Whereas we ask, if the goodness and efficiency of a Sermon consist in its matter—in its evidence, strength, and validity of arguments and proofs, or in any thing else that words may contain,—what is there of all this in the best Sermons being *uttered*, which they lose in being *read*?

In fine, it seems that there being various modes of communicating religious knowledge, either by public reading of the Scriptures themselves, or by Homilies explanatory of them, or by the perusal of books privately, or by hearing Sermons publicly,—though all of them be, and are in themselves, effectual, yet this latter by Sermons, because perhaps of its operations being more sensibly noted at the time, from various things connected with a public delivery, hath grown into an over-estimation; and from the other modes being unfoundedly, in the first instance, thought less effectual, they have still further been disparaged,

as being, without Sermons accompanying, *not effectual at all*. An opinion clearly unwarranted, both by the Word of God, and the opinion and practice of the Church of Christ in all ages.

XXIII. On PRAYER.

IN close connection with Doctrine, is *Prayer*; and both together may be well taken to illustrate the notion of *angelic intercourse* between earth and heaven: the Hearing of the Gospel being the reception, as it were, of heavenly messengers from God; and Prayer being the response we send back by them to Him. It is the very nature of the Supreme Good, to delight in imparting of itself; and Prayer, therefore, is most consonant and acceptable to God. And hence Prayer is often used for religious service in general; inasmuch as none can be considered complete without it; and the House of God is in Scripture emphatically denominated the “House of Prayer¹.”

Not only is Prayer a duty to ourselves, but also to our neighbour; since it is the most effectual mode we can take of doing good to *all*, whatever be their station, or circumstances, or tempers. When, through inability on our own part to bestow, or disinclination on theirs to receive, we can help them in no other way, we may do so effectually by Prayer for them. Where-

¹ Matt. xxi. 13.

fore holy Samuel said to the Israelites, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you¹." And when we hold communion in Prayer, then does our employment most resemble that of the blessed society in heaven. Hence, most heavenly gifts have been communicated to men, whilst thus employed².

XXIV. *On PUBLIC Prayer.*

THIS duty is double : Private Prayer concerneth us as individual men ; Public Prayer, as members of Christ's Church. And inasmuch as the whole exceedeth an individual part, so therefore the latter may be considered as ranking higher in importance than the former. Hence St. Paul attaches much weight to public prayer being made in his behalf³. And, indeed, it hath many striking advantages on its side, tending to edification : in that the subject-matter of public prayer must be *sound*, to meet public approval ; our own devotion in it warmed by *sympathy* of numbers ; and a good example thereby given to the Church at large. And hence the evils of its neglect are proportioned to the benefits of its observance ; so that well might holy David so frequently express his sense of its beneficial tendencies⁴, and in his period of exile

¹ 1 Sam. xii. 23. ² Dan. ix. 20 ; Acts x. 30. ³ 2 Cor. i. 11.

⁴ Ps. xxx. 4 ; xcvi. 9 ; xliii. 4 ; lxxxiv. 1.

lament his deprivation thereof more feelingly than of any thing else¹.

XXV. *On the FORM of Common Prayer,*
or LITURGY.

As the human heart and mind are powerfully aided by the *solemnity* of public devotional exercises, great care should be taken to conduct them with all propriety and reverence, befitting the majesty of Him whom we worship. When this is done, the very sacredness of the place itself is calculated to impart a character of holiness to our deportment and feelings: an impression arises of the more immediate presence of God, and of His holy angels, such as St. Paul's words import².

And as this reverence groweth from the *place*, in the same way it attacheth to him that ministers therein; whose authority, as the legitimately appointed interceder with God, and whose zeal, piety, and gravity, must needs be a still further aid to devotion³.

But the greatest help herein, seems to be that

¹ "Even prayer itself, when it hath not the consort of many voices to strengthen it, *is not itself*."—BASIL, *Epist.* 88.

² 1 Cor. xi. 10.

³ They are no fit suppliants to seek His mercy in behalf of others whose own unrepented sins provoke His just indignation. "Let thy priests therefore, O Lord, be evermore clothed with righteousness, that thy saints may thereby with more devotion rejoice and sing!"

afforded by a *public form* of Prayer, framed after the model of those of regular primitive Churches, wherein extemporaneous effusions were unknown. Indeed no rational mind can mark the deformities in the undigested pourings forth of those, whose only appointment is the fancied *private gift* of the Spirit, without feeling the superiority of a Set Liturgy; and seeing sufficient reason why the use of it, by a regularly appointed ministry, in a peculiarly consecrated place, should be acceptable unto God.

XXVI. *Objections against a SET FORM of Common Prayer answered.*

DEVOUT Public Prayer being a universally acknowledged instrument of good, and a powerful means of edification in the Church of Christ, it hath ever been the device of the enemy of souls to disparage and bring it into contempt; and hence has arisen a suggestion, that a *set form* of common prayer is superstitious. Whereas we find God himself appointed a set form of blessing for Moses to use¹; and we also find Christ giving a *model* of prayer to His disciples², as if almost to prevent this conceit of the excellence of extemporaneous prayer. Moses, likewise, composed a Hymn, in gratitude for deliverance from Pharaoh, which became a regular part of the Jewish Liturgy; and in

¹ Num. vi. 13.

² Matt. vi. 9.

this latter were sundry hymns, prayers, benedictions, and thanksgivings, gathered from various writings of holy men, and interspersed amongst readings from the law and the prophets. And we find the Saviour adopting a custom from it,—of singing a psalm with His disciples, after the last supper with them¹. The Apostle also speaks² of “making melody unto the Lord, in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs :” which must be either the result of immediate inspiration ; or else, on ordinary occasions, of previous meditation, for the edification of the Church.

XXVII. *Objections against OUR Form of Prayer.*

INDEED, the objectors, after a while, seeing the futility of their accusation, admitted the expediency of a Set Liturgy : their charge dwindled away to certain *exceptions* against it, as containing things too much resembling those of Rome ; as being too long, and thereby abridging the sermon ; as repeating the Lord’s Prayer too often ; and having the Litany, Athanasius’s Creed, and many other superfluous things. Hence the charge of error is abandoned, and matters are reduced to the mere test of *opinion* and expediency.

¹ Matt. xxvi. 30.

² Eph. v. 19.

XXVIII. *On the alleged TOO NEAR CONFORMITY of our Liturgy with that of the Church of Rome.*

As to our alleged conformity to Popish Liturgies, it would be violently extreme to assert, that the Church of Rome is to be followed *in nothing*. Though erring in some things, she errs not in all; and where she follows reason and truth, we hesitate not to adopt her ancient and excellent forms, in preference to the newer fashions of objectors. For, indeed, they seem to throw a disparagement even over their own forms; inasmuch as they leave it to the *discretion* of the minister, either to use some of them, or else to “pray as the Spirit of God moveth his heart.” And, moreover, their Liturgy, after all, is only appointed for *preaching days*,—their rule seeming to be “no sermon, no service;” whereas we consider daily Public Prayer (even as the Church of Rome doth) a *complete duty* in itself, whether there be preaching or not. In this respect we had rather follow the perfections of those whom we like not, than the defects of those we love.

XXIX. *On the ATTIRE of Officiating Ministers.*

THOUGH the *Attire* which a minister of God uses be but a mere matter of *form*, and abstractedly in itself indifferent, yet there seems a decency and propriety in it, as giving a distinctive character to the person offi-

ciating. Indeed, we find the early Christian writers, Jerome and Chrysostom, both alluding to the clerical officiating costume of white robes, in their times. And our Church, in adopting them, seems only to exercise a sound discretion, in following to a certain extent the custom in the House of God under the Law; wherein His ministers officiated in robes especially appointed by Himself, for “glory and for beauty¹ :” the colour of ours being emblematical of that purity of heart, and lightsomeness of spirit, wherewith we ought to worship and praise Him that delighteth in holiness². And, indeed, the conduct of the objectors themselves somewhat singularly overturneth their whole argument against the practice of our Church herein; for whereas at first they asserted, that the “Popish apparel, the surplice especially, hath been a very sacrament of abomination,—a scandalous ceremony,—that causeth men to perish, and make shipwreck of conscience;” and that “it ought to have been burnt and consumed as a thing infected by leprosy;” yet subsequently, after holding counsel with their brethren in foreign churches, they came to the conclusion, “that ministers might lawfully submit to the endurance of the custom imposed upon them by authority, and not give up

¹ Exod. xxviii. 2.

² To solemn acts of *royalty* and *justice* their suitable ornaments are a beauty: are they only in *religion* a stain?

preaching, or forsake their pastoral charge, for the bare inconvenience of a thing which in its own nature is indifferent." So that what in the first instance was so heinously offensive that it might not be adopted, "even though" (to use their own words) "it were to win thousands," now turns out to be nothing more than an *inconvenience*, which may be endured, rather than a pastoral charge should be relinquished! So much for the spirit of cavil and objection in those who set up themselves as the only fit judges of propriety.

XXX. *Of GESTURE and CHANGE OF PLACE in officiating.*

THOUGH it might seem to be almost debasing the solemnity of religion, to dispute on such frivolous points, yet a reply must be made to certain objections that have been raised against our practices of *gesture*; such as standing, sitting, kneeling, and bowing, at different parts of our service. Now, when we make profession of faith, we stand; when we pray and confess our sins, we kneel: because the gesture of firmness and constancy is expressed by the one, and of penitent humility by the other. In like manner, the minister proclaimeth, by public reading, the Law of God, so as best to be heard by his hearers; and they listen thereto in reverent attention. Some portions of the Liturgy, having been originally devised for the Communion,

being profitable even when there is no administration of it, are therefore read at the Table ¹. Some things are uttered as *from* the people unto God, some as *with* them unto God, and some as from God unto them; and the whole is intended and arranged to promote that seriousness and reverend seemliness of devotional service, so right and proper, when in the presence of that God whom we fear. And further answer to such futile objections as are raised herein seems unnecessary.

XXXI. *On the alleged EASINESS of our Form of Prayer.*

It has been made matter of fault, that our Liturgy is so *easy* that even a “child may perform the service.” Surely this in itself should be no objection, if the *matter* thereof be good and edifying. Like all other pre-script forms, it is true that it requires only orderly reading; and yet, though easy, still such a service demands the thought, gravity, and solidity, of mature age, to perform it fitly in “the assembly of the saints.”

¹ At the name of Jesus we are accustomed to *bow*, albeit no man is constrained to do it; and we only intend thereby a reverent regard to the Son of God, *above other messengers from Him*, in opposition to Jews, Arians, and others, who derogate from the honour of Christ. As for any *erroneous estimation*, such as is alleged, of advancing the Son above the Father and the Spirit, our belief of the doctrine of the co-equal Trinity saves from any fear of this sort.

As to extent of learning and aptness to teach, these have no place herein, beyond the ability of reading as behoveth. Be it observed, however, that this affords no plea for clerical ignorance; there are many other duties wherein such talents are required of the clergy¹; and it would be well if the conduct of the laity did not sometimes stint and cramp the motives and exertions towards greater attainments in such matters.

XXXII. *On the LENGTH of our Service.*

IN reference to Prayer itself, we may remark, that our Lord rebuked two faults therein: one, when open or public prayer proceeded from *ostentation*; the other, when length of prayer arose out of *superstition*. Hence, as public prayer is only then faulty when it arises from hypocrisy; so the length of prayer is not in itself a fault, except when it springs from error and superstition. Indeed, as St. Augustine well remarks, our Saviour reproveth it not, otherwise “He would not Himself have continued whole nights in the exercise thereof.” We must consider prayer, not only with respect to God, but also with regard to man: a certain length affords scope for detail of our wants, and gives also an edifying gravity and weight, which would be wholly lost by a quick despatch.

¹ Even if all the clergy were as learned as the objectors require, how would this affect the Liturgy, seeing it would still be the same?

Under the Law, portions of the Law and the Prophets were read, Psalms recited, and Prayers put up, in the synagogues : these seem to be as necessary now, after Christ's appearance, as before ; and if thereto the reading of the New Testament be requisite, as it is, then the *length* of our service cannot well be cavilled at, unless it be insinuated that we cannot afford the *time* for devotion under the Gospel that was given under the Law. The Apostle himself recommendeth *variety* in public service¹; and so long as edification is obtained, no accusation of too much speaking can reasonably lie².

XXXIII. *On EJACULATORY Prayers.*

ON the other hand, the objectors deride *short* Ejaculatory Prayers, such as are sometimes used, briefly and vividly to express the ardent desires of our souls : a practice approved by Augustine ; which, nevertheless, they, in the spirit of contradiction, coarsely condemn.

XXXIV. *On the intermingling of LESSONS with our Prayers.*

THERE is an advantage in having Scripture Lessons mingled with Prayers. By natural constitution, one

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 1.

² Hooker here somewhat sarcastically remarks, that as our Service at the utmost is not above two hours and a half, so it only exceeds that of the objectors by half an hour,—a very grievous burden indeed to flesh and blood, and loudly calling for redress !

set of faculties cannot continue very long in exercise without pain; and we require change. Now, the work of Prayer kindleth a spirit of holy contemplation in the soul, so that he who hath been praying is thereby more attentive to hear; and similarly, he who hath been hearing, is made the more earnest in prayer.

In performing our service to God, we have to do with One who knoweth all our wants beforehand; and therefore, the service must not be compared or assimilated to our making petitions to earthly monarchs, or measured by what forms we might use towards them. Indeed, the practice of the objectors themselves, in their own religious services, is a sufficient answer to their cavils herein.

XXXV. *On our Petitions for EARTHLY blessings, and frequent use of the LORD'S PRAYER.*

PREMISING, generally, that no alteration would save our Liturgy from their charge of tediousness, but such as pruned and pared away every thing to the exact model of their own, we may briefly remark on the objections in detail. First, our prayers are said to have "too many petitions for things earthly." Now, it is true that spiritual gifts are the most precious, and spiritual perils the most dangerous; hence our petitions ought to take rather a heavenly flight, than an earthly one: and so they always will do, in proportion

to our advance in religious wisdom and knowledge. But Public Prayers are for the great bulk of mankind : and even as those that resorted to the Saviour on earth generally did so for some bodily relief, and were thereby led to seek for spiritual help also ; so the very mention of our particular earthly wants in prayer may have the effect, as well of impressing a sense of our dependence upon God for every thing, and of thereby leading us to look to Him for *all*, in the rejection of every sinful means ; as also of imperceptibly elevating our affections to things above, and leading us to higher and heavenly interests.

Our Lord's Prayer has indeed only one petition for earthly wants, out of seven : yet, perhaps, He may therein set forth rather a pattern of what we should *aim* at, in the way of perfection ; whereas our Liturgy is framed somewhat with a view to men *as they are*, in order to bring them to what they should be. And hence our frequent use of the Lord's Prayer ; placing it at the early commencement as a sort of guide, and introducing it frequently in the course thereof. And this we do, not only because of its intrinsic efficacy and value, but also because the use of it seems to have been intended as a special mark of distinction for Christ's disciples. Hence, indeed, the Fathers¹ styled it *orationem legitimam*, the prescript form of Prayer, to

¹ Tertullian and St. Augustine.

which Christ had bound His Church; so that wherever Christianity obtains, the dutiful use of it obtains also. And (as St. Cyprian says) if it be promised, “that in His name what we ask we shall receive; must we not needs much rather obtain that for which we sue, if not only His name do countenance, but also His very speech do present our requests?” Surely, words so pleasing to God, as those which His own Son hath composed, it is not possible for men to frame; and, in using it in its simple form, we are sure that we utter nothing which God will either disallow or deny ¹.

XXXVI. *On the Congregation REPEATING after the Minister.*

ONE custom in our service is particularly found fault with, viz. that of “the people repeating after the minister.” Now, two occasions seem especially suited for its adoption: the first, at the General Confession; and the other, when, after having received the Communion, the minister and people repeat the Lord’s Prayer together ². In the former, all the congregation do individually and collectively acknowledge humbly their sins; and in the latter, after having received the

¹ We do use many other prayers, but none so frequently as this, for the causes assigned; and if the practice be edifying, trifling cavils ought not to move us from it.

² After the Restoration, the same rule was extended to the Lord’s Prayer, wheresoever it is used in divine service.

blessed gifts of the Eucharist, they do, in unison of heart and tongue, offer up that effectual and comprehensive Prayer, which their Lord and Master taught them. And the edification derived therefrom is not to be sacrificed to any fanciful fastidiousness of taste, as to alleged harshness of sound arising from the voices of numerous utterers.

XXXVII. *On our mode of reading the PSALMS.*

As to the mode we adopt in reference to the Psalms, “the people reading them alternately with the minister,” it may be briefly observed, that there is in them so great a variety of matter,—magnanimity, justice, wisdom, repentance, patience, the mysteries of God, the sufferings of Christ, the terrors of wrath, the comforts of grace, the works of Providence, the joys of heaven,—in short, matters so every way suited to the varying feelings and conditions of man, in every circumstance of mortal probation, that we covet to make them *familiar to all*; and, therefore, iterate them oftener than other parts of Scripture, and call the people to join therein, in order to impress them on their memories.

XXXVIII. *On Music with the Psalms.*

MUSICAL Harmony, whether of voice or instruments, hath so powerful an effect upon the heart and

soul of man,—influencing the feelings, softening the passions, soothing the griefs, stirring the affections, and filling the mind with heavenly joys, according to the different characteristics thereof,—that it greatly availeth as an aid to devotion ; elevating men's hearts, and sweetening their affections towards God. Hence the prophet David, skilled as he was both in poetry and music, deemed *both* necessary in divine service under the Law ; and the Church of Christ herein followeth so wise an example ¹.

In church music, however, light and wanton harmonies seem utterly unsuitable. But where such sounds are used, as fitly adapt themselves to the matter, and harmonize with the solemn service, then hard must be those hearts that remain unaffected thereby, and wherein the sweetness of melody doth not minister an entrance for goodly and spiritual things ; so that we may well, with St. Basil, admire the wisdom “ of that heavenly Teacher (the Spirit) which hath found out a way, that doing those things wherein we delight, we may also learn that whereby we profit.”

¹ Even those objectors who abrogated *instrumental* music, because it savoured of legal ceremonial, used and approved of *vocal* melody, as an aid to devotion. It remains for them to show how one is more a legal ceremony than the other.

XXXIX. *On Psalms and Prayers by* ALTERNATE
RESPONSES.

IF, in holy David's estimation, the very congregating of people together for worship did of itself form a bond of union; how much more may we hope that sweet charity and unity may grow between pastors and their flocks, when in the presence of God himself, and of His holy angels, there is a constant reciprocal interchange in holy forms of worship, and an interlocutory dividing between them of humble confessions and earnest petitions, and warm praises and grateful thanksgivings unto God; whereby they mutually, as it were, stir up each others' devotional zeal, to the glory of Him whose name they magnify together, after the manner of angelic natures, in the courts of heaven¹.

It is somewhat uncertain when the practice arose, of chanting Hymns and Psalms *alternately*; and there are differences of opinion herein. It seems, however, not improbable that it was commenced, if not by Ignatius, yet in his days; and if so, in Apostolic times. Indeed, the celebrated letter of Pliny to Trajan seems to strengthen this supposition, which states of Christians, that they used to meet together and praise

¹ "I saw the Lord (saith Isaiah) on a high throne: the Seraphim stood upon it; and *one cried to another*, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory."—Is. vi. 1, 3.

Christ with hymns as a God, *secum invicem*, “one to another amongst themselves.” But whoever was the author, and whatever the time that this practice arose, it hath been in the Church sufficiently long to ascertain its great utility, and to prove the unreasonableness of those who would set it aside; especially when they would do it on such frivolous pretences, as that by alternately chanting men are deprived of half their share in the service,—that they cannot so well understand after that fashion,—and other idle cavils not requiring an answer. It is a practice received in all Christian Churches,—held for many ages,—ratified by Councils,—resorted to by God’s people of old for edification,—calculated to excite holy desires, to banish evil thoughts, to soothe desponding minds,—and, in brief, to elevate our souls to that heavenly condition, which the Apostle describes when he says, “Speak to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord¹.”

¹ Eph. v. 19.

It is not meant, however, that what is thus attributed to the Psalms depends altogether on the *form* we adopt in thus using them; but only, that as they have been found in primitive times, as well as ever since, when so used, to have these blessed fruits, there seems no occasion to alter what is, by experience, proved to be so good.

XL. *On the use of MAGNIFICAT, the BENEDICTUS, and NUNC DIMITTIS.*

As we read the Psalms oftener than the other Scriptures, for causes already assigned, so a similar reason holds for our using the Evangelical hymns of *Magnificat, Benedictus, and Nunc Dimittis*, oftener than the Psalms; inasmuch as they concern us still more nearly, just as the Gospel toucheth us more closely than the Law. Indeed, were this not so, the very paucity of them, and the fact that in each case there is also a Psalm which the minister may use if he pleases *instead*, seem to render any objection on this head futile. But, as we have said, there is a peculiar propriety in their use in a Christian Church,—they being specially Gospel hymns, the first congratulations wherewith the Saviour was welcomed, and the prophetic declarations of His actual presence; and, therefore, capable of appropriate and fruitful adaptation to the case of all those in Christian communion and interested in the precious blessings of redemption¹.

XLI. *On the LITANY.*

As the ancient Jewish Church had many public solemnities of worship wherein the people bore a share,

¹ Just as the Psalms of David and Asaph were used by those in the Jewish Church that succeeded them, so may these Evangelical hymns of Simeon and Zacharias be used by us now.

so in primitive times there were some of a similar sort amongst Christians. Amongst these (as appears from Tertullian) were solemn *Processions*, as they were termed, used at the interment of Martyrs, and at subsequent visitations to their graves. The objects of these were by degrees extended into solemn periodical *Supplications*, for appeasing of God's wrath, and averting public evils: these were termed by the Greeks, *Litanies* (λῑται) ; by the Latins, *Rogations* (*rogationes*) : both meaning the same thing, namely, Supplicatory Prayers. In the year 450, Mammercus, Bishop of Vienna, on the occasion of some great national alarms, after the example of former holy men, had recourse to God for aid ; and on that occasion corrected and perfected the Litanies already in use, adding thereto certain portions suited to the present exigency, for averting impending evil. These Litanies were subsequently used by Sidonius, Bishop of Arverna, on occasion of a famine, and of one of the persecutions so frequent in those days : and, by degrees, they came to be considered as a great prop and comfort of the Church ; so that, in 506, the council of Aurelia decreed an annual Processionary Service of three days, at the Feast of Pentecost ; and about fifty years afterwards, Gregory I., in order to preserve uniformity in the Latin Churches, compiled from these various services one General Litany, for the use of all.

Circumstances however occurred, that brought what was originally good into disrepute; and it was thereupon that the custom of Public Processions ceased. The Litanies used in them, for deprecating plagues, calamities, famines, wars, and other adversities, and for intreating God's clemency and favour, were therefore henceforward confined within the walls of the Church, after such alterations and corrections had been made, as brought them to their present state of excellence.

Litanies, therefore, being of such very ancient usage, and the circumstances of man being always liable to peril and trial generally, both our own interest and Christian charity bind us to their use now, as well for our own benefit and protection, as also for that of all our brethren in the Lord, with whom, and for whom, it is our duty to sympathise and to pray.

XLII. *On the ATHANASIAN CREED, and the GLORIA PATRI.*

FROM the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ we received that brief *Confession of Faith*, which hath been always a badge of the Church, and a mark whereby to distinguish Christians from Infidels and Jews. "This faith" (saith Irenæus) "the Church, though dispersed through the world, doth notwithstanding keep, as safe as if it dwelt within the walls of

some one house, and as uniformly hold as if it had only but one heart and soul; this it preacheth, teacheth, and delivereth, as consonantly [uniformly] as if but one tongue did speak for all."

In the beginning of the fourth century, however, under Constantine the Emperor, this unity of faith was sadly threatened. *Arius*, a priest of the Church of Alexandria, a clever but ambitious and disappointed man, began to broach that heresy wherein the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His co-equality and co-eternity with the Father, were denied. Deprived of his office, he nevertheless drew after him a number of followers, from amongst unwary minds. In order to allay the grievous disquietudes hereby occasioned, and bring back unity in the Church of Christ, Constantine summoned the famous *Council of Nice*, consisting of three hundred and eighteen bishops. Here was drawn up, by common consent, that Confession of Faith called the *Nicene Creed*; which was subscribed to by all, even the Arians themselves, who were present.

It would seem, however, that this subscription by the Arian party was not made in good faith, but only with a view of preserving themselves from deprivation and exile, and of reserving themselves for future more favourable opportunities of spreading their tenets, after the Emperor's death. In the meanwhile, every method was taken by them of weakening, by sundry pre-

texts, the influence of their opposers; and particularly that of *Athanasius*, who, during his whole life, was harassed by their malicious persecutions and false charges; and though he always rose triumphant in refutation, yet nevertheless the object of his adversaries was somewhat answered, if it were only by casting a damp upon the spirits of his friends, and deterring others from imitating his resolute course. And by a train of events, perhaps mainly owing to a sort of impolitic severity and negligence in the orthodox party, the Arian heresy insinuated itself, and spread; and Constantius, the successor of Constantine, in remorse for having too readily been influenced thereby, assembled a General Council of bishops of the whole world, on the controversy, to be held at two several places: the Western bishops, at *Arimine*, in Italy; the Eastern ones, at *Seleucia*. The Seleucian Council at once condemned the heresy, and excommunicated the maintainers thereof; but the Ariminian one, though having a great majority against it, suffered themselves to be outwitted by the policy of the minority, and joined in a subtile ambiguous confession of faith, drawn up by the Arians.

Some good to the Church, however, arose out of these evils. Athanasius, about A. D. 340, drew up ¹

¹ [It seems, however, that Hooker's opinion on this point is not well-founded; from various considerations, it is now generally ad-

that Creed of his, which, by singular precision and plainness, went to clear and maintain that faith which Arianism so strongly impugned. It was first submitted to Julius, Bishop of Rome, and probably shown afterwards privately to the Emperor Jovian, for his information in true doctrine ; but, because of the heat and violence of party spirit, it was not then publicly used, as now, in the Church.

This Creed, and the Nicene one,—which had an addition or two made to it by the Council of Constantinople, on certain points of dispute that had subsequently arisen,—we retain, therefore, as *Catholic Confessions of Faith*, framed and approved by those whose opinions must have all the authoritative weight arising from their being so much nearer the times of the original promulgation of the Faith than ourselves ; and used in the Church of Christ, generally, ever since.

With respect to the *Gloria Patri*, wherewith we usually conclude our Psalms, it seems to be fitly so used, in the way of dutiful and joyful acknowledgment of His supreme excellency, which is so often the sub-

mitted, that this Creed was *not* written by Athanasius, but upwards of a century after his death (which was in 373). It, however, may fairly be considered as embodying the doctrines he held, and the grounds whereon he founded his arguments.] For the history of its reception into different Churches, see Dr. WATERLAND'S *History of the Athanasian Creed*, vol. iv. p. 241, *et seq.* Oxford Ed. 1823.

ject matter of the Psalms. It is, moreover, of very ancient custom: "We must," (saith St. Basil) "as we have received, even so baptize; and as we baptize, even so believe; and as we believe, even so give glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." We baptize in these names; we believe in these names; and, therefore, we ascribe glory to these names. The *Arians*, seeing how this ascription made against their tenets, endeavoured to evade its force by altering its form, saying, "Glory to the Father, *by* the Son, and *in* the Spirit;" instead of "to the Father, *and* the Son, *and* the Spirit;" which latter form of ours at once declared the co-equality of all three. And yet herein, after all, their scheme will not bear them out; for although we acknowledge the glory of all three to be co-equal, yet the modes of its manifestation are different: for the brightness of the Father's glory has spread itself through the world *by* the ministry of the Son, and is evidenced *in* the gifts of the Spirit; and whatever we do to the Father's glory, is so done *in* the power of the Holy Ghost, and made acceptable *by* the merits and mediation of Christ.

Indeed, it was only after Arianism sprung up, that such curious *particularity* arose. It was the custom of the Church to end, sometimes the Prayers, and always the Sermons, with the *Gloria Patri*; and St. Basil having, from indifferency, used either form of ascrip-

tion, was afterwards brought into serious difficulty thereupon, and, though an archbishop of known orthodoxy, could only excuse himself by voluminous apologetic treatises.

On what ground, then, are we called upon to dismiss such safeguards of true faith and doctrine, as the *Athanasian Creed*, and the *Gloria Patri*, which have ever been so much esteemed and used by the Church? Even if Arianism be quenched, still, as *formulae of sound faith*, they may well be retained for their own intrinsic excellence; and also may be used as safeguards against Heresy generally. And in these days, especially, do we seem to require the support of every such bulwark, when Heresies seem to spring up as fruitfully and perniciously as ever; and when the authors thereof seem to have selected those very places as particularly *suited* to the growth and development of their pestilent errors, where this Creed hath been permitted to fall into *disuse*.

XLIII. *On our want of PARTICULAR Thanksgiving.*

OUR Liturgy has been found fault with, because “there are *no thanksgivings* for the benefits for which there are *petitions* therein.” Now, it might be replied, that if a *special* thanksgiving were requisite, corresponding to *every* petition, why is it not so in the Liturgy of the objectors? But, to waive this; the

Form of Prayer given by our Lord hath *not* such a correspondency; nor, indeed, can it reasonably be, in the nature of things. Many petitions are for graces that we continually need, and also for others that are never fully enjoyed in this life; and some are bestowed so diversely, and sometimes so imperceptibly, that they can only be acknowledged in some *general* form: and for this, the daily use of Psalms and Hymns seems best suited, wherein praise and thanksgiving are offered in warm and devout language, according to the Apostle's advice¹. At the same time, for striking public blessings or deliverances, we have indeed solemn special Public Forms of Thanksgiving, appointed, as is seemly, on the removal of plague, famine, or any common calamity; and not a poor recognition of it, in a few words thrust into an ordinary collect or prayer.

XLIV. *On the alleged UNSOUNDNESS of some parts of our Liturgy.*

FROM an evident spirit of cavilling, objections have been raised, 1st, Against the phrase in the *Te Deum*, "When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers;" as countenancing the error, that the faithful, who died *before* Christ's coming, were not till then made

¹ Eph. v. 19; Coloss. iii 16.

partakers of joy, but remained in the place called *Limbus Patrum*, or Lake of the Fathers: 2nd, Because request is made for preservation against “sudden death;” whereas the pious should be always prepared: 3rd, And also, because we pray that God would give us what “for our unworthiness we dare not ask;” which is alleged to savour of Popish servile fear, and not of the filial confidence of the pious: 4th, Likewise because we intreat “that we may be evermore defended from all adversities;” this being, as is alleged, a hope not warranted by Scripture: 5th, Because we implore “that God would have mercy upon all men;” which cannot (as they assert) be, to those that are vessels of wrath.

XLV. *On the FIRST alleged unsound phrase.*

IN reference to the first of the above-named objections, it may be observed, that Christ hath opened heaven in such sort, that whereas none can be saved but by Him, and by Him “all that believe” are saved; the *object* and *end* of all His suffering was, to open those doors of heaven which our iniquities had closed. When, therefore, by His ascension He completed His great work, He did thereby virtually *procure* the salvation of *all that are saved*. What was the condition of the *souls* of the faithful before Christ, the phrase does not advert to; their *bodies* will ascend, as

well in consequence, as also after, Christ ; and if happiness *was* the portion of their souls, it was virtually procured by Christ's ascension.

XLVI. *On the SECOND alleged unsound phrase.*

As to the second objection, though a good Christian life be the best preparation for death, and though, in a natural and general point of view, a sudden death might be desirable, because thereby preserving us from lingering and wasting anguish and decay ; yet it seems more consonant to the feelings of a pious mind, that our departure out of life should be after the manner of holy Jacob, Moses, and other patriarchs ; who ended their days in peace, and calm, and devout preparation, commending their souls to God, invoking blessings upon their posterity, and exhorting them to piety and virtue. Hence, good men may well prefer to endure some pains of dying mortality ; as well with a view to have a convenient season for that solemn preparation, wherein the soul is often cheered and supported by illapses of heavenly consolations and joys, as also for the edification of others thereby, and for the avoiding of those rash constructions which uncharitable minds are too often ready to put upon such sudden visitations of Providence.

XLVII. *On the THIRD alleged unsound phrase.*

THE third objection urged, against the confession of “our unworthiness and fearfulness to ask any thing, otherwise than only for His sake, to whom God can deny nothing,” seems utterly groundless. It argueth nothing of such slavish *popish dread* as is alleged ; but it fitly expresses a sound apprehension of His super-eminent glory and majesty, before whom we stand : from whence spring a reverential mode of speaking, and an humble godly fear, becoming our character as petitioners in the presence of the High and Mighty One. But in this fear there is nothing of despair : after all, we *do ask* those things, for which in our own names we *dare not* ; only, however, with a holy boldness and confidence in the name and through the merits of Christ Jesus,—with that filial *awe* which becometh saints, and not with that irreverent *familiarity* inconsistent with Christian humility.

XLVIII. *On the FOURTH alleged unsound phrase.*

THE next objection alleges, “That to pray for deliverance from *all* adversity, is to ask for that for which there is no warrant in Scripture.” Now, men of real religious feelings view all the important events of life as in connexion with God ; and all the various emotions of pious admiration, joy, gratitude, and

praise, may be comprehended in one sense, under the name of *Prayer*,—which is, in fact, the opening of the heart unto God. Petitionary Prayer is the language of an impotent creature, sensible of its wants, for relief; made in the assured faith of God's ability and willingness to grant for Christ's sake, through whom alone it is acceptable to Him. But though the prayer of Christian faith be always thus *accepted*, it is not always necessarily *granted*; but only so far as is consistent with God's glory, and man's chief good. Hence the failure of the petitions of the saints is no certain mark of God's displeasure: the sacrifice of their lips is, notwithstanding, pleasing to Him; and the very withholding of their requests may be for their good¹, even as those of the wicked may be granted to their own punishment.

Now, Prayer is a *means* to two ends: either to obtain what God hath promised to grant, at our request; or to declare the desires of our souls towards that which, though lawful and good in itself, there is no assurance whether we shall obtain. Things in themselves unlawful, or things impossible (as the changing of past events), are altogether unfit subjects for prayer; but other things, though the counsel of God, *secret to us*, may have determined them otherwise,

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 7—9.

and being in this sense impossible, may nevertheless be prayed for.

Our blessed Saviour, for instance, as *man*, prayed for things which He knew *would* come to pass ; because prayer was a necessary and appointed *means*¹. But we know that He also prayed for things which did *not* come to pass ; as when He prayed that the “cup might pass from Him² ;” because it was not consistent with God’s purpose and glory, in man’s salvation, that it should pass from Him³.

Now, in this limited sense, we have a promise in Scripture, with reference to the faithful servant of God, that “whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper ;” and that “mercy embraceth him on every side ;” and hence we may properly pray to be delivered from *all* adversity, with the same limitation of it, viz., so far as is consistent with God’s glory and our chief good. And in those cases where the secret counsel of God is

¹ Compare Psalm ii. 8, and John xviii. 1, 2.

² Matt. xxvi. 39 ; Luke xxii. 42.

³ [Hooker here enters into a long disquisition respecting the two *wills* in Christ : a divine and a human one,—consequent upon the union of the Godhead and manhood in Him : as also upon the different desires of the human will,—the one the result of natural impulse, the other the offspring of reflection. Thus, Christ, as God, resolved to suffer ; whilst, as man, his first natural prompting was to deprecate suffering as an evil ; but, secondly, His deliberate judgment disposed Him to accept death for the world’s salvation, and thus to fulfil all, as man, that, as God, He had determined.]

against the effect of any particular petition, yet the prayerful affection itself is an acceptable sacrifice to Him, as showing the desires of our souls, and expressing our dependence upon Him, and our submission to His sovereign will: and as angels were sent to minister comfort to Christ in His agony, so the effect of our prayers, though the request be denied, will be to draw down upon us spiritual grace and edification.

This is further illustrated by St. Paul's prayer for the Church of Corinth, that "they might not do any evil¹," although he knew that no man liveth which sinneth not; and that our daily prayer must be "forgive us our sins." We must seek to be supported against every sin in particular, lest we fall under it; and, therefore, though we cannot expect to be so far preserved from sin collectively, as that no portion whatever shall cleave to us, yet still is it our duty to pray thus against all sin; and, in a limited sense, the prayer may be fulfilled, in our general preservation from great and grievous apostacy.

Tribulations and trials often work different effects upon the mind: to the lower faculties they naturally appear grievous, and to be deprecated; but, to the higher ones, they may appear as conducive to good uses, both in a moral and religious point of view,—and therefore, to be patiently received and acquiesced in.

¹ 2 Cor. xiii. 7.

Scripture confirms this latter opinion, to our comfort, in order to reconcile us the more to them. But, though it declare that “by many tribulations we must enter into heaven,” yet it nowhere forbids us to deprecate them; neither does it frustrate our Lord’s admonition, “Pray that ye enter not into temptation.”

Hence, the prayers of the Church, to be delivered from *all adversity*, are no more inconsistent with Christian patience and meekness under calamities, when they do happen, than our Redeemer’s prayer before His passion, was repugnant to His own gracious resolution to die for the sins of the whole world.

XLIX. *On the FIFTH alleged unsound phrase.*

THE last of the fore-mentioned objections is, “That when we pray God to have mercy upon *all* men, we ask an *impossibility*; inasmuch as there are *vessels of wrath*, to whom God will never extend mercy.”

Now, first, this petition is in itself accordant with that catholic Christian charity and love for all, which Scripture enjoins us to entertain, and which the Apostle styles to be acceptable in the sight of God,—congruous with His desire that “would have all men to be saved¹,” and also with His purpose who gave Himself “a ransom for all²,” and hence, in a general sense, it may be a means towards the conversion of all. The purposes of God

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 4.

² 1 Tim. ii. 6.

are secret to us : we have no power to discern *who* may be castaways : he which now believeth, is a child of God ; and he which believeth not, may yet, nevertheless, become such : and, therefore, as in a general sense it is allowable to pray against all sin and all adversity, though we feel the petition cannot be specifically fulfilled ; so here charity leads us to hope the best for all who are yet in life, and whose repentance is not cut off by death, and thus disposes us to pray for all.

Herein we doubt not that the act itself is good and acceptable in God's sight, even though His purposes and our petitions may be in some cases contradictory. And when, in an enlarged desire for the extension of God's grace and mercy, we pray for all men, our prayers *are* granted in behalf of those that shall be saved ; and as to the others, we only act towards them in conformity with the direction of our Saviour to His Apostles¹, that they should pray for the peace of such as might even be—(unknown to them)—incapable of the blessing.

God's *general* Revealed Will must be taken as our guide, irrespective of any *occasional* Will secret from us ; and when, therefore, the object of our desire is good in itself, and not forbidden of God, proceeding from charity, guided by piety, and conformable to the

¹ Matt. x. 12, 13.

example of the Redeemer himself, then our deed cannot but be a sacrifice well-pleasing and acceptable to God, even though in some instances His *secret* determination be haply against us.

Hence, our Church, following the goodly example of ancient times, and “acknowledging God’s hidden judgment as a gulf which, whilst we live, we can never sound,” does, with meek submission to His gracious will and pleasure, pray not only for all Saints, but for all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics, and even for *all men*, that He would graciously have mercy upon all.

L. *On the SACRAMENTS as divinely appointed MEANS of Salvation.*

INSTRUCTION and Prayer are subsidiary duties to certain higher ones, of which *Sacraments* are the chief. The Church is that very mother of our new birth, in whose bowels we are all bred, at whose breasts we receive nourishment; and as many as to our judgment are born of God, receive the seeds of *spiritual* regeneration through her ministrations of the Word and the Sacraments, both which have a generative force and virtue.

A Sacrament, properly so called, consisteth of two parts: a visible outward ceremony and substance; and a secret sacred gift or grace supernatural, such as only

God can bestow¹. Upon this efficacious virtue of Sacraments dependeth their necessity; and, therefore, it behoveth to inquire into *the grace* they are intended to communicate, and *the mode* by which this is accomplished.

Now, Sacraments give a “grace that worketh salvation;” they are the instruments of God to eternal life. As our natural life consists in the union of body with soul, so does our spiritual life in the union of the soul with God; and this union between God and man can only be made by that *mean* which is both, viz., Christ Jesus. Hence we must consider, first, how God is in Christ; then, how Christ is in us; and, next, how the Sacraments do serve to make us partakers of Christ.

LI. *On the INCARNATION of the WORD, who is
VERY GOD.*

“THE Lord our God is one Lord.” But in this indivisible Unity we adore the *Father*, as being altogether of himself; the consubstantial Word, or *Son*, which is *of* the Father; and the co-essential *Spirit*, or Holy Ghost, which proceeds *from* both. Hence they are distinguishable from each other by their properties.

¹ How, then, should any but *the Church* administer those ceremonies as Sacraments, which are not thought to be Sacraments by any but the Church?

For the substance of God, coupled with this property *to be of none*, makes the Person of the Father; the self-same *substance of God*, with this property, *to be of the Father*, maketh the Person of the Son; and the self-same *substance of God*, with the property of *proceeding from the other Two*, maketh the Person of the Holy Ghost. So that in each Person there is implied both the *same substance* of God, which is One; and also the peculiar *property* which distinguishes it from the other Two: each has his own peculiar subsistence, though others have the same substance: just as Peter and Paul have a separate individuality of person, though the self-same nature; or as angels have the same spiritual essence, though possessing separate individuality of existence,—*e. g.* every angel not being *the* angel that appeared to Joseph.

When God became man, it was however neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost, but that Person in the Trinity who was the Word, or the Son, that assumed our flesh; but yet the Word being in substance very God, the divine *nature* of all these was verily incarnate, though in the single *Person* of the Son. The salvation of the world was not simply in itself impossible without the incarnation of the Son, but it became so, because the will of God determined to save it *only* by the death of His Son; and thus, since the wisdom of God determined to save man, in one sense, by man

himself, Christ therefore assumed human nature, and took unto Him our flesh, making it thereby His own flesh; and thus having of His own,—although from us,—wherewith to make offering unto God for us. Thus did God in Christ reconcile to Himself the world. And in this view there is a congruity in the Son's being incarnate, rather than the Father or the Spirit; inasmuch as we become the adopted sons of God through the natural Son of God, and the world was restored by that Word by whom it was originally created.

LII. *On the HERESIES respecting our Lord's Incarnation.*

It is not in the power of man, however, either to explain or fully conceive this doctrine of the Incarnation,—how God and man are united in one Christ. It is, indeed, the trial and test of our *faith*, that we should fully acquiesce in that which exceeds the grasp of our comprehension. And hence, from men's indulging in various conceits to explain, as they fancied, that which is in itself inexplicable, arose various Heresies; and especially that of *Arius*, who denied the proper divinity of Christ,—which, for a long time, sorely troubled the Church. After the council of Nice, in 325, had decided about various heretical notions, others soon followed. The *Macedonian* heresy,

denying the divinity of the Holy Ghost, and the *Apollinarian*, denying the proper humanity of Christ, were the occasion of a council at Constantinople, consisting of 150 bishops; wherein that Confession of Faith was drawn up, which is used in our Liturgy at the present day, as a preservative of sound faith against erroneous doctrine.

After this sprung the *Nestorian* error, which went to deny that the divine and human nature made one person; and that, consequently, there were *two* distinct persons in Christ: an eternal one, Son of God; and a human one, Son of man ¹.

Now, St. John says, “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt *in us*,” that is, *in our nature*,—an equivalent expression to what is elsewhere said, “He took not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham.” The Son of God did not assume any one individual man’s person,—thus making two persons, the one *assuming* and the other *assumed*; but He took the “seed of Abraham,”—the *original element* of our nature, before it had any personal human subsistence: the flesh, and the conjunction of the flesh with God, began at one instant, and was one act, whereby the eternal Son of God, still continuing one person, changed only the

¹ [For a further account of these heresies and councils, see SMITH’S *Manual*, 2nd Edition, p. 431.]

² John i. 14.

³ Heb. ii. 16.

manner of His subsisting,—which before was in the glory of Divinity, and is now in the habit of Humanity.

Yet, whereas Christ has no personal subsistence but that whereby we acknowledge Him Son of God, hence all that is spoken of Him, even in His human nature, must be understood of Him in His Divine personality. We must not sever and separate,—saying, for instance, that it was only the nature of man that was baptized and crucified,—but must consider and believe, that the Person of the Son of God, taking to Him the nature of man, did in that Person suffer what that nature made Him capable of receiving. He had a human substance, because He took the *nature* of man; but His divine Personality, as Son of God, suffered not the substance He took to be personal, although the two natures continued conjointly. Hence (against Nestorius) no Person was born of the Virgin, but the Son of God; no Person was crucified, but the Son of God: and hence that one only point of Christian belief,—the *infinite worth of the Son of God*,—is the ground of our belief, in all things concerning life and salvation through Jesus Christ.

The heresy of Nestorius was condemned by the council of *Ephesus*, A. D. 431. But the line of argument to defend Christianity against Nestorianism led to

the rise of an opposite *Eutychian* heresy : for as it had been held, that the divine and human natures in Christ made but one Person, this was by Eutyches wrested to mean that they made but *one nature* ; thus confounding and blending divinity and humanity into one : an error that was denounced by the council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451.

Our true path is, to avoid the *distraction* of Persons, wherein Nestorius erred ; and *the confusion* of them, whereby Eutyches was deceived. The two natures, from their first combination, remained distinct, though inseparable ; for when the soul through death forsook the body, His *Deity* forsook neither body nor soul : had it not been so, the Person of Christ could not have been said to be buried, nor yet that it did raise up itself from the dead ; for the body, separated from the Word, could in no true sense be the person of Christ ; neither, in raising that body, could He be said to raise Himself, if it were not both with Him and of Him, even whilst it lay in the sepulchre. And, by a parity of reasoning, the same must be held of the union of the Deity with the *soul*, otherwise we lapse into Nestorianism. The very Person of Christ was inseparably joined with both *body* and *soul*, even in their state of separation in the grave.

LIII. *Christ's Divine and Human Nature* INSEPARABLE, *but yet* NOT CONFOUNDED; *the essential properties of each remaining the same.*

BUT this union of two natures does not destroy or confuse the peculiar properties of each: what is peculiar to the Deity remains in Christ uncommunicated to manhood; and what is natural to man, His Deity is incapable of receiving. His omniscience, for instance, and omnipotence, eternity, and glory, belong to His Deity; and by His taking our flesh He was capable of being nourished by food as man, and to feel grief and pain, and other passions of humanity. The two natures are as incapable of *confusion* as of distraction; and yet, their coherence destroyeth not the difference between them: flesh doth not become God, but continueth flesh, although it be the flesh of God; and of each substance the properties are separately preserved: manhood is not swallowed up in the Godhead, nor is Deity confounded with humanity.

Though the two natures, however, are thus peculiarly distinct, yet they may both *concur* to one effect; and, therefore, Christ may be said to *work* both as God and man, in one and the same thing: of both natures there is always an *association*, often a *co-operation*; but never a *participation*, whereby the properties of the one are infused into the other.

From this association of two natures in one Person, there hath arisen a sort of interchange of the names, God and Man, when we speak of Christ. Hence, when the Apostle says they “crucified the Lord of Glory,” or when Christ asserts of the Son of Man that He “is in heaven,” if the passages be taken abstractedly, there is stated of the Deity that of which it is incapable, viz. *passion*; and of humanity, that which it admits not, viz. *ubiquity*. So that, in such instances, we must understand the assertion to be made of the **WHOLE PERSON OF CHRIST**, both in His divine and human nature.

And hence we shall reconcile what seem apparent contradictions in the Fathers: *e. g.* Theodoret says “God cannot suffer,”—meaning thereby Christ’s *divine nature*, against Apollinarius, who held the Deity to be passible; and Cyril, “whosoever denies very God to have suffered death doth forsake the faith,”—meaning, against Nestorius, the *inseparable* connexion of divinity with humanity.

LIV. *On the RESULTS of Christ’s assuming Humanity.*

WE now come to consider the communion of Christ with the Father, and in what respects He receives from God.

First: As regards His divinity, He hath received the gift of *Eternal Generation*, in that He is the Son

of God. *Every beginning is a Father* unto that which cometh of it; and *every offspring is a Son* to that out of which it groweth. The Father alone hath His Deity originally; but Christ is God by being *of God*¹: what He hath in common with the Father is *given*; and yet not given in the way of benevolence, but naturally and eternally given.

Second: As respects His humanity, Christ received the gift of *Union*. His human nature hath the honour of union with the Deity; and, in virtue of that union, all things are “*given* into His hands;” and it hath *pleased* the Father that in Him “all fulness should dwell;” a name is *given* Him “above every other name;” and, in virtue of this gift of grace, Man is really made God.

This union, however, doth not cause any alteration in the higher nature: it remaineth unchangeably the same; and, therefore, the only thing acquired to the Son of God, by His incarnation, is a capability of enduring and suffering for the good of others. Nor yet are the *properties of man's nature* changed, by virtue of that union; only the *state* and *quality* of humanity is thereby *glorified*, and our flesh *honoured* by becoming the flesh of the Son of God: thereby Christ has become the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Peace, of the

¹ Light by issuing out of Light.

whole world; and God hath deified our nature, not by turning it into Himself, but by making it His own inseparable habitation.

: Third: Christ also received the gift of *Unction*. Although the union of Deity with manhood imparted to the latter none of the essential properties of divinity; yet there were communicated thereby, both to the soul and body of Christ, graces and virtues of high value and perfection: a peculiar unspeakable illumination of the *soul*, arising from its intimate communion with Deity; and an illustrious glorifying of the *body*, rendered capable of endless continuance, and endowed with vital efficacy and celestial power, so that the angels in heaven adore it: in short, a divine unction, fulfilling the prophetic words of David, “That God anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows.”

Briefly to recapitulate: *Four* things concur to complete the whole state of our Lord Jesus Christ:—His Deity;—His Manhood;—the Conjunction of both;—and the Distinction of one from the other. Against these four points have arisen four grand heresies: *Arianism*, denying the proper Divinity of Christ; *Apollinarianism*, misinterpreting His Humanity; *Nestorianism*, dividing the inseparable Conjunction of the two natures; and *Eutychism*, confounding them. And against these respectively were the four most famous

General Councils held : at *Nice*, to establish the doctrine of Christ's proper Divinity ; at *Constantinople*, to maintain His Humanity ; at *Ephesus*, to assert His being One in both natures ; and at *Chalcedon*, to declare that He had still *both* natures in one Person.

These four may indeed be considered as including the principles of all other heresies whatever, respecting the person of Jesus Christ ; and in four words we may oppose an answer to each, viz. *αληθως, τελως, αδιαιρετως, ασυγχυτως* : truly, perfectly, indivisibly, distinctly¹. And we conclude, that to save the world, it was necessary that the Son of God should be thus incarnate ; and that God should be thus in Christ.

LV. *On Christ's OMNIPRESENCE ; how understood in reference to His Humanity.*

As the benefits of Christ's incarnation and passion can only extend to those who are made *partakers* of Him, and as we cannot participate Him without His presence, it will be advisable now to consider *how Christ is present* ; that it may more evidently appear how we become partakers of Him, as well in the Sacraments as otherwise.

Now, no *created* substance can ever become unlimited ; or receive such properties as to make it *infinite* ;

¹ Or truly God ; perfectly man ; indivisibly God and man, in one ; distinctly, in that One, God and man.

for then it would cease to be a creature. Its substance forms the measure of its presence.

But God is *omnipresent* : His pure immaterial substance, incomprehensible to us, is never absent from us ; which, although we discern it not, we know partly by reason, and more perfectly by faith.

Omnipresence, then, is the peculiar property of Deity. Hence, nothing that pertaineth to Christ's *humanity* can be omnipresent. It is only in His Deity that He can exercise this prerogative of Deity. Thus, when we say He suffered death, it was as *man* that He suffered what human nature was capable of ; but when we say He conquered death, it was in His character of Deity. Hence, when the Person of Christ is essentially present with all things, it is in that He is "very God ;" and not in His manhood, because it neither was nor can be capable of such a presence.

As St. Augustine says, "In that He is personally the Word, He created all things ; in that He is naturally man, He is himself created of God." And *man* being a creature of that *particular kind* whereunto God hath set bounds and limitations, so the human nature of Christ cannot be present through all creation. If indeed it were, it must be by the grace of *union* accruing to it from His Deity ; but this has been already disproved, inasmuch as it hath been

shown, that though these two natures were conjoined in Him, yet neither imparted to the other any of its own peculiar properties¹. Hence Christ's body can have only a *local* presence, and not an *ubiquity*. It had a definite substance, and was not everywhere, when He suffered and was buried. Neither is it now everywhere, when advanced into heaven; for otherwise, if Christ's glorified body be everywhere *substantially* present, then the majesty of His estate must have extinguished the *verity of His nature*, and it is no true and proper body².

But though it be thus that Christ, *as man*, is not omnipresent, yet because His human substance is inseparably joined to that Divine Word which is present with all things, then, because of this inseparable conjunction, that nature may, *after a sort*, be said to have an universal presence, which actually and substantially it hath not.

And as the manhood of Christ may thus in one sense be admitted to be virtually omnipresent, because that Person is so, from whose Divine substance manhood is nowhere severed, the person of Christ *being whole*, perfect God and perfect man; so it may further be admitted, from the *co-operation* of His human soul

¹ As to the grace of *Unction*, it only perfectionally advanceth His human nature, but doth not extinguish it.

² [This is pointed against a prevalent error of the *proper* ubiquity of Christ's glorified body in the Eucharist.]

with Deity in all things. As the Deity of Christ before His incarnation wrought all things without man, so since then, He works nothing wherein His assumed nature is absent or idle. From the understanding and will of His human soul nothing is hidden or unacquiesced in, which His Deity performeth. Now Christ, both as God and man, hath supreme power given Him over all things, as the reward of His humiliation and obedience unto death; in consequence whereof, God hath glorified that nature in heaven which glorified Him by obedience upon earth. All things are put under His feet, and He is appointed over all the Head to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. This government He exerciseth both as God and man; as God by *essential* presence with all things; as man by *co-operation* with that which is essentially present.

Moreover, in one sense, the body of Christ, though actually and substantially limited and defined, hath a sort of virtual unlimited presence, as has just been said, because of its intimate conjunction with omnipresent Deity; and being the body of the Son of God, whereby He effected a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, this gives it a *presence of force and efficacy*, and enables it to have a kind of omnipresent sacrificial virtue throughout all generations of men. And hence in this sense is truly fulfilled the Lord's promise, "Lo! I am with you always."

LVI. *On the COMMUNION between Christ and
His Church.*

PARTICIPATION of Christ is “that reciprocal inward hold and property which we have of and in Christ, and He of and in us.”

Now from the identity of the indivisible essence of the Godhead, there is a mutual participation and indwelling of the three Persons in the Trinity; the Father is in the Son, and the Son in Him; they both in the Spirit, and the Spirit in them; and this *eternally*. The Son, therefore, is in the Father, as light in that light out of which it undividedly floweth; the Father in the Son, as that light continuously in the light which it causeth; and as the same holds of their eternal being or life, the Son therefore liveth by the Father. Hence, also, the eternal love of the Father to His only begotten Offspring: and this love reacheth unto Christ in His manhood as well as His Godhead, in that His incarnation causeth Him to be now in the Father, as *man*, and the Father to be in Him. And from the double communication of life to Him, first as the WORD, and next as *man*, there ariseth such a perfection of mutual love and communion, as can exist between no creature whatever and God.

All other things, indeed, that are of God, have God

in them, as the principle of their life, without which their annihilation must ensue. But because of the difference between created substance and Divine essence, the communion is of a far different kind to that between Christ and the Father.

Thus all things which God hath made, are the offspring of God¹; they are in Him as the effect in the cause, and He is in them as their *life*². And when to this is superadded a *saving efficacy*, then men, who were naturally *sons of Adam*, acquire a special relationship, and saints in Christ become the *sons of God*. Being in God not only naturally as their Creator, through the first Adam, but spiritually in Him as their Saviour, through the second Adam, the love wherewith the Father loveth the Son reaches to those that are His spiritual offspring³. There is a real, positive, mystical union, by which Saints form one Body, whereof Christ is the Head: we are in Him even as though our very bones and flesh should be made continue with His; or as the branches are a portion of the vine. Briefly, we are the adopted sons of God to eternal life, by partici-

¹ Acts xvii. 28.

² John i. 4. 10.

³ God, having *eternally* loved His Son, must therefore have eternally loved that Son's spiritual offspring: but they who were thus in God through Christ eternally, according to Divine *foreknowledge and intent* (Eph. i. 4), require nevertheless a real and actual adoption into the body of His true Church, and fellowship of His children, in order to salvation.

pation of the Only-begotten, whose life is the well-spring and cause of ours.

It is too *cold* an interpretation by which some expound our "being in Christ" to mean no more, than that He took upon Him the self-same nature that we have; for in this sense, *every* man would have communion with Christ. The Scripture speaks of a far higher and more sacred coherence¹. Even as we have a participation with Adam as his posterity naturally, so have we, through grace, a real participation of Christ spiritually. Adam's corruption of nature is derived to all; but Christ's incorruption is derived to all that belong to Him: and except we truly be partakers of Him, and possessed of His Spirit, salvation cannot be ours.

This participation or communion of the saints with Christ is wrought by the agency of His Spirit, which quickeneth us; even as it sanctified our nature in Christ, rendered it an available sacrifice, and raised and exalted it to glory. And, moreover, there is a communion between the Manhood of Christ and our bodies; corruptible naturally, they do, by virtue of the mystical union with Him, receive a vital efficacy, whereby they shall endure in immortality. Christ therefore is, both as God and man, that true Vine, whereof we, both spiritually and corporally, are branches.

¹ John xiv. 20; xv. 4.

Now, Christ's work was undertaken, that the blessings of grace might be commensurate with the malediction through Adam; and this by a gradual process of a saving interest in His meritorious sacrifice, and in the virtues of His body and blood, followed by the sanctifying graces unto newness of life. But yet, though all partake of His providence, as Creator and Governor, all are not partakers of His *grace* as a Saviour. Neither, again, of those that *do* receive this grace, do all receive in *equal* measure¹; and as our participation of Him consists in the effects derived to us from both natures of Christ, we therefore partake of Him more largely, or otherwise, in proportion to the measure of his imparted gifts, and to the true actual influence of grace, whereby the life we live according to godliness is His, and whence we receive those perfections wherein eternal happiness consists.

Thus we participate Christ, partly by *imputation* of His righteousness to us, partly, as has just been said, by a real *infusion*. And the first step in this, is an infusion of the Spirit of Christ², which is the foundation and source of all other graces, and is called by way of eminence "the seed of God³." And this

¹ Christ, however, is *whole* with the whole Church, and whole with every part of the Church, as touching His *Person*, which can in no way divide itself, or be possessed by degrees and portions. But participation of Christ implies, besides this mystical *presence* of His Person, an actual infusion of *grace*.

² Rom. viii. 9.

³ 1 John iii. 9.

Spirit doth actuate and conjoin to Christ, their common Head, and to each other reciprocally, *every Believer*, however distant and separated by time and space; even as if He and they were compacted into one body, quickened by one and the same soul.

Our participation of Christ, however, by *imputation* is not by *degrees*: being the imputation of acts and deeds, their virtue must remain in Him that did them; or it must pass as a *whole*¹, by virtue of His infused grace. Thus, all saints become the sons of God; in which state, though there be different degrees of excellence, yet touching this, “that all are *sons*,” they are all equals.

And thus the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; both in all things, and all things in them: thus Christ hath communion with His Church; and every member thereof is in Him by original derivation, and He personally in them by mystical association, wrought through the gift of the Spirit; which Spirit they that are His receive from Him, and therewith also all the benefit of His body and blood: they receive grace in degree sufficient to preserve and sanctify them, till their day of final and perfect exaltation to fellowship in glory.

¹ Just as Christ's personal presence (as stated in the previous note) can only be as a whole.

LVII. *Sacraments* NECESSARY to a PARTICIPATION
of *Christ*.

It is a grievous derogation from the holy efficacy of the Sacraments, for men to consider them as mere means of *instructing* the mind by other senses than those of hearing; they have a far holier and more heavenly use. For, besides that they serve as memorials of Christ's blessed sacrifice,—as bonds of obedience,—as incentives to holiness,—as supports of faith,—as obligations to sweet charity,—and as badges of sincere profession,—they are also heavenly ceremonies, ordained of God, and sanctified by Him, as *sure pledges of saving grace*, given to all that are capable thereof, and as *means* which He requireth to be used by those to whom He imparteth grace. The invisible God appoints them as manifest *tokens* whereby we may apprehend when the blessings of Christ and His Spirit are imparted; inasmuch as, through these sensible means, He communicates those blessings which are incomprehensible: even as the troubling of the pool of Bethesda was a sensible token of the angel's presence; or the fiery tongues a sign of the presence of the Spirit in the Apostles.

It is not God's will, *ordinarily* to bestow the *grace* of sacraments on any, except *by* the sacraments. The grace, however, thus consequent upon the sacraments,

does not spring out of *themselves* abstractedly; it is only the *gift* of God, through them as *moral* instruments unto spiritual life, and *not* as food is a physical support to natural life. Hence, unless we have the requisite qualifications, though we do receive the sacraments, we *receive not the grace of God* therewith.

The necessity of the Sacraments, therefore, arises from their being the means appointed by Christ, for communication of grace to His members; moral instruments, for the *use* of which we have His express commands,—for the *effect*, His conditional promise. They are not mere naked *signs*, or simple *memorials*; but *effectual means*, whereby, when duly and properly received, God imparteth unto us “grace unto life eternal.” The sacrament of Baptism conveyeth the *commencement* of divine grace; that of the Eucharist, the *continuation* thereof: the former is required therefore but once; the other often, as gradually helping us forward to the ultimate consummation.

LVIII. On BAPTISM and its ESSENTIALS.

THE inward grace of a Sacrament may serve to teach what is the most suitable element of form; and unto these visible elements must be added words of express declaration from our Lord’s appointment, to constitute their sacramental character. Hence three things are necessary to complete the substance of a

sacrament: viz. the *grace* offered; the *element* signifying that grace; and the *words* of declaration.

And whereas a religious action, to constitute it such, requireth a *serious meaning*, and the *known intent* of the Church is such in these rites, we must presume that her public minister, who outwardly doth the service, hath inwardly the suitable intention; inasmuch as we cannot know his secret mind¹. And as beyond these fore-mentioned requisites, all other forms in sacraments are merely accidental, albeit they may contribute to the greater decency and solemnity thereof; yet in cases of necessity and urgency it is better to have, for instance, the Sacrament of Baptism, even without its accompaniments of solemnity, than that any one should depart out of life without it.

LIX. *The SCRIPTURE-WARRANT for outward Baptism.*

SOME have said that no such necessity can exist, as to warrant Baptism without its decent solemnities; and they assert, that the notion arises from a false interpretation of the passage, "Unless a man be born again of Water and the Spirit;" wherein the *former* word is used metaphorically: and since being "baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire," meant only

¹ This is applied to those who held that the validity of the Sacraments depended upon the secret intent of the minister's mind.

with the *Holy Ghost*, of which fire was the emblem; so in the above passage, “being born again of the *Spirit*” is all (as they say) that is really meant. But it seems an infallible rule in Scripture, that wherever a literal construction will stand, it is the safest; and when we find Water and the Spirit specifically mentioned,—the one as the element to be used by us, the other the gift to be bestowed by God,—it is a dangerous construction to imagine, that what is ordered to us is superfluous. And if further we find, that the Apostles (who had been, as we are, before baptized) were new baptized by the Holy Ghost, and in this later baptism as well with a secret infusion of the Spirit, as also with a visible descent of fire, it will be our safest course in the work of our new birth, which is to be by Water and the Spirit, to follow out *literally* what He hath enjoined.

LX. *How far Baptism is NECESSARY to Salvation.*

As to the necessity of Baptism, Christ taught Nicodemus that regeneration was absolutely necessary to life eternal; and, moreover, that this was to be effected by His Spirit¹. And as the Spirit is thus a necessary inward cause, so is Water a necessary outward means; else why is it so expressly mentioned and insisted on².

¹ John iii. 3, 5.

² Eph. v. 26; Tit. iii. 5; Acts ii. 38.

And though outward baptism is not in itself a cause of grace,—which in some instances has been conferred before baptism,—yet ordinarily it is not a *mere sign*, but a divinely-appointed means, incorporating us into Christ, and conveying to us as well the *saving grace* of the imputation of His merits, which taketh away all former guilt, as also the influence of the Spirit, which empowereth the soul to newness of life.

To those that depend upon God's eternal election, it is a self-deceiving vanity to suppose that *means* are thereby dispensed with. The Apostle¹ only pronounced those elect saints who had embraced the Gospel and received the sacrament of life; *till then*, notwithstanding any secret pre-ordination, he counted them children of wrath. Predestination bringeth not to life without the grace of external vocation, which of itself implieth Baptism².

It is equally an error to hold, as some do, that *faith* alone is necessary to the attainment of all grace: sacraments are in their place as much required as faith. And if Christ require Baptism as necessary to take away sin³, it is not for us curiously to inquire what may become of unbaptized persons, but to obey Him herein, and religiously to fear the neglect thereof.

¹ Compare Eph. i. 1, and v. 8.

² As we are not *naturally* men without birth, so we are not Christian men without new birth, which *ordinarily* can only be by Baptism.

³ Mark xvi. 16.

Yet this necessity must be interpreted by certain maxims of equity; for, as when it is said, “Whoso believeth not is condemned,” it is pre-supposed that an opportunity for hearing hath been given; so in divers cases there may be life given by virtue of inward baptism, where the outward rite has not been afforded. Hence, he who had become a martyr for the faith, without previous opportunity of Baptism, is not excluded from the rewards of faith, the blood of his martyrdom being to him for Baptism. And, after a similar mode of reasoning, if those possessed of sound faith and Christian charity, be prevented by some unavoidable necessity from Baptism, we may not think them excluded,—their very *desire* being as a baptism to them.

As regards infants which die unbaptized: since grace is not tied to sacraments absolutely, and the lenity of God may accept the intention for the deed in some cases, the desire of their parents herein may be imputed to the offspring instead of Baptism. And, indeed, the very circumstance of their birth being from believing and baptized parents, seems to give them, as Scripture intimateth¹, a sort of privilege and title to the ordinances of Christ’s Church; and if, therefore, through some casualty, they be deprived of the outward sacrament, we may fairly hope He will not deprive them of regeneration and inward grace.

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 14.

And yet, albeit this be so, the lenity of God to them is no justification for our neglect herein. The Church is as a mother to her children, and it is her bounden duty to see they have their soul's rights, and not to deprive them thereof, for the sake of some more orderly ceremony of administration than the exigence of the case admitteth; for though they, through God's mercy, be saved, yet in that case blood-guiltiness lieth at her door. Having no specially appointed day or time for its administration, as the Jews had, Baptism doth therefore belong to infants from the moment of their birth; and those that contribute to deprive them thereof do, as far as in them lieth, wilfully cast away their souls.

LXI. *On the things that may be DISPENSED with in Baptism, and on LAY-BAPTISM in cases of necessity.*

HENCE, the ancient Church, though generally choosing two days for the public administration of Baptism,—viz. Easter, and Pentecost or Whitsuntide,—yet, in cases of manifest peril, permitted private baptism at home. And though its administration appertained only unto the clerical order, yet some sanctioned even Lay-baptism¹ where the necessity of the case admitted no other. What, then, are we to think of

¹ Neither Tertullian, Epiphanius, Augustine, nor any other of the ancients, is against this.

those who, because of the lack of some outward ceremony, would refuse the rite, even if (in their own words) “infants should be assuredly damned without it:” though, however, they do not, after all, admit this conclusion. We rather hold, that positive ordinances should bend to necessity, and that thus “mercy should rejoice against sacrifice¹.” Christ hath strictly enjoined Baptism upon all men, but He hath not so strictly limited its administration to be in public assemblies: and though public holy ordinances are good in themselves, and not to be omitted when practicable, yet they are in this place but the lesser matters of the Law; whereas Baptism itself is the weightier, which *must be done*, although, according to circumstances, the other may or may not be left undone. To argue otherwise, savours of a spirit of hardness quite at variance with the meek charity and mercy of the Gospel.

LXII. *On Baptism by WOMEN, and on*
RE-BAPTIZATION.

HENCE Baptism, even by women, in great and urgent necessity, has been allowed by some Churches, and with apparent reason. If want of *calling* frustrate Baptism, then it applies equally to that of laymen as well as women. The objection from the passage against women teaching² avails not here; as that refers

¹ Matt. ix. 13.

² 1 Tim. ii. 12; 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

to *public* ministrations. Neither do general ordinary rules apply here, inasmuch as the case must be an admitted extraordinary one, to justify it. But when so given, is any one prepared to maintain that the rite is utterly frustrate, and as though it had never been given at all?

Iteration of baptism is inconsistent with the Gospel declaration, "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism¹." "One Lord," as having no other conjoined with Him; "One Faith," as admitting no change or innovation; "One Baptism," as being the same means of grace for all, and only to be once received,—inasmuch as, after the analogy of natural birth, we can only be once spiritually born. Hence the Nicene Creed, "I believe *one Baptism* for the remission of sins."

The notion of re-baptization originated with Tertulian, and was carried out by Novatian, on the plea that none but the true Church can give true Baptism; which Church he claimed himself only and his followers to be. Subsequently, the African Church, with St. Cyprian at their head, came into the notion that Baptism by heretics was invalid. But these novelties were well resisted by the bishop of Rome, and it came to be admitted that no heresy, but such as was unsound in essential articles of faith, could invalidate Baptism; and an Arian might be reconciled to the Church without

¹ Eph. iv. 5.

re-baptization¹, provided his baptism had been in the name of the Trinity.

As, then, heresy doth not frustrate Baptism, still less doth *unworthiness* of the minister do so. And yet from this notion, sprung the powerful heresy of the *Donatists*; and partly through the popular view of their tenets and their pretensions to superior sanctity, and partly because at that time what seemed a more dangerous enemy, viz. *Arianism*, had to be fought against by the Church, their error eventually spread far and wide. And when at last some zealous parties, in order to defeat them, unwisely trod in their steps, and caused Donatists to be re-baptized before admission into the Church, this called for Imperial edicts to restrain re-baptization, as well on the one side as on the other; and men began to acquiesce in the truth, that evil ministers of good things do *not* prejudice the virtues thereof to others.

Later times have renewed the error of *re-baptization*, though on different grounds: the Anabaptist useth it in regard to those who have been baptized when infants; because he holds, that there can be no true Baptism without true actual faith in the recipients, which infants cannot have.

Now, the Church of Christ always held, that whenever Baptism was seriously administered, in the same

¹ See Book III. ch. i. page 62.

element, and with the same form of words, wherewith Christ instituted it, no accidental omission or defect whatever could deprive it of the character of a true sacrament; and that, in such cases, re-baptization is unlawful.

And though God hath appointed separate orders of men to minister in His Church, and publicly to dispense His sacraments, so that those who thrust in unsanctified hands to perform a holy office which is not theirs, are utterly wrong, and their conduct disallowed; yet it does not follow, that either the virtue of God's word or of Baptism shall be frustrated to the recipient. The unauthorized teacher loseth his reward; but yet (since the Law of God nowhere declareth, that if the minister be incompetent, His word shall be no word, and His baptism no baptism) his usurped actions therefore have their virtue unto others; and the want of a lawful calling in those who baptize, maketh not Baptism vain.

For Baptism is a rite both moral, ecclesiastical, and mystical. As *moral*, it is a duty performed to God; and, as such, it requires a religious affection, as well as an outward act,—an *opus operantis*, as well as an *opus operatum*,—to render it perfect. As *ecclesiastical*, its performance is regulated by the Church. As *mystical*, all that is necessary for its completeness is the element, the word, and the serious application of both to

the recipient,—together with the secret reference of the act itself to salvation through Christ. As then, though God require in elder ones faith, yet in infants that baptism alone, to which by virtue of their Christian birth they are entitled, if such baptism be complete in its mystical character, it is enough; and should irregularity exist, the blame must rest with the administrator, but the virtue cannot be lost to the recipient. The argument, from unauthorized jurisdiction among *men*, will not hold here: in social compacts all is settled and understood on both sides, and their violation is a grievance; but Baptism being a spiritual benefit, which God pleaseth to bestow through the instrumentality of men, if unauthorized hands give it, still it is a blessing, given to those that much need it, and is not prejudiced because the instrument is faulty ¹.

This view was taken by the Fathers; for, although there be in their writings passages against unorderly baptism, yet these resolve themselves into blame against the *giver*, and not into detriment to the receiver. St.

¹ The same process of reasoning applies to the argument brought forward from unauthorized baptism being as a fraudulent deed, or stolen seal: it will not hold; for God is the donor of grace in Baptism, through special men, for order's sake; but yet infants of Christians, as such, have a *federal* claim to it; and if they are put in possession, it is of what is *their own* after all, and they are not consenting parties to the irregular manner of its reception.

Augustine even saith, “ But suppose it (Baptism) of very purpose usurped and given unto any man by every man that listeth, yet that which is given cannot possibly be denied to have been given, how truly soever we may say it hath not been given lawfully.” Indeed, herein there is an analogy between natural and spiritual birth; for if in violation of holy wedlock, illegitimate births do notwithstanding take place, even so there may be spiritual birth although there may be faultiness in the transgressors of the laws of Christ’s Church.

The act of circumcision performed by Zipporah upon her son, when Moses, being for his neglect of it stricken with sickness, was unable to do it himself, is also analogous to this view. It was a case of *necessity*; and though therefore a breach of the law, in being performed by a woman, it was *effectual* and acceptable to God, as was proved by the speedy recovery of Moses. If, then, disorderliness did not prevent *that* from being a true circumcision, even so may it be in the case of Christian baptism.

Since, then, the efficacy of the sacrament of Baptism doth not depend, *per se*, on the authority of the minister, whose external office therein is an honour, which they who usurp incur blame unto themselves; since a mistake, originating in the misconceived opinion of the actions of others, cannot make those actions frus-

trated ; since lay-baptism, and even that by women, in cases of necessity, hath the sanction of the pious and learned in all ages, and also that of many Reformed Churches ; since it is defended by some, permitted by others, and only disapproved by a few ; therefore it followeth, that though it may perchance through defects in some cases, lack some of the fruits, yet, after all, lay-baptism, having all that the ordinance of Christ requireth, hath the nature of true baptism ; and it is so far valid, that persons who have received it may not be re-baptized.

LXIII. *On INTERROGATORIES in Baptism.*

SALVATION being only attainable *through faith* in Christ, a public profession of the Apostolic Creed is a necessary pre-requisite to admission into His Church.

Now all doctrine consists either in *principles*, or in *conclusions* drawn clearly therefrom. The former may either be evident in themselves, or else revealed by the light of a supernatural power, to which we yield implicit assent on the authority of the Divine source whence they emanate. The mysteries of our religion, therefore, although beyond our comprehension as creatures, we firmly acknowledge to be certain truth ; and this belief or faith is the first step of admission into the family of Christ.

By faith in Christ, the love of God is secured to

us; and this, because of its being His own gracious work in our hearts, inasmuch as every thing loveth that which proceedeth from it. And as faith is the foundation of a sacrament, so a profession of *belief* is fitly required, as a pre-requisite to the sacrament of Baptism. But as faith is a mere intellectual operation, it is not enough to have a conviction of the mind only; there must be an expressed resolution of the *will* to renounce the works of evil. Hence interrogatories on these two points of faith and obedience are pre-requisites in Baptism.

LXIV. *On Interrogatories to INFANTS in Baptism.*

BUT some, admitting the propriety of infant baptism, object strongly to the interrogatories put, inasmuch as to question those who cannot respond, is absurd. And yet it is clear that Baptism generally was never administered in the Church without such previous interrogatories, nor yet that they were ever omitted in the case of Infants. For although there be not *actual* faith in them, yet the very reception of the Sacrament itself has the *nature* of faith; it is the seed, which ripens and brings forth fruit, as the understanding progressively perceives and acknowledges the truth,—the first ghostly motion, as it were, towards actual faith. If we account men believers, merely because belonging to the outward Church of Christ,

though inwardly hypocrites, then much more may we account infants such¹, who not only have in them nothing contrary to faith, but have likewise had the *grace* of God given them, out of which belief groweth².

Baptism is a solemn covenant between God and man, and as such necessarily involveth reciprocal conditions, remission of sins and graces of the Spirit on the one side, and faith and obedience on the other. And that infants are capable of such a covenant, is evident from the law of God, which enjoined that of circumcision upon infants³. Baptism being for their inexpressible good, admitteth, as a covenant of *mercy*, that what they are unable of themselves to do, they may perform by others, whose promises herein are as equally available with a gracious God, as if they had been their own.

Neither is this benefit to be denied to the children

¹ As to the objection, "that if infants be *believers*, they must be of the *elect*," it does not apply here. Such objectors can term *all* of their own party *elect*, albeit there may be many hypocrites; and, therefore, when Christ says of infants, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," and, consequently, that they are elect, we may well rest the matter there.

² Till they come to actual belief, the very "*sacrament of faith*" is a shield as strong as, after this, the faith of the sacrament is, against all contrary infernal powers; which whoever thinks it impossible is, undoubtedly, farther off from Christian belief, though he be baptized, than are these innocents, which at their baptism, albeit they have no cogitation of faith, are, notwithstanding, pure from all *opposite* cogitations, whereas the other party is not free therefrom.

³ Gen. xvii. 14.

of evil or unbelieving parents. Under the Law, circumcision was not confined to the lineal posterity of Abraham, but was extended to proselytes, and even to purchased slaves, their masters being to them *in loco parentis*. Even thus, in similar cases, the Church of Christ may be considered as exercising a motherly care for the souls of the children whose parents are wicked, in admitting them into her bosom at the hands of those that present them; and as the Samaritan, "that showed mercy," might well be styled *neighbour* to the wounded man, so those, though strangers, who bring infants to be made children of God, may piously be styled their fathers and mothers in God, or god-fathers and godmothers. And inasmuch as the promise made, is not their own, the Church requireth it to be in such a form as if the child *personally* answered. Hence in every age of the Church, the promise was considered as actually that of the person baptized; just as in civil contracts, a guardian's engagements for the benefit of his ward are binding upon the latter, even though done without his knowledge.

LXV. *The SIGN OF THE CROSS in Baptism a significant and advantageous ceremony.*

THOUGH many ceremonies that formerly accompanied Baptism have been discontinued, as rather encumbering the rite than otherwise; yet since refor-

mation doth not mean total extinction, so we have retained one ceremony, that of signing with the cross, which has been grievously objected to, as being a mere invention of man, and not directed in Scripture.

Before we proceed further, it may be well to define *Traditions* to be “such ordinances as were instituted in the primitive times of Christianity, by that authority which Christ hath left to His Church, in matters indifferent; and as such, requisite to be observed till the like authority see reasonable cause to alter them.” Hence traditions are not to be utterly and rudely discarded, merely because they were of men’s invention.

Now the *signing of the cross* is a very significant ceremony, and as such is calculated for serious impression¹; not that it is used at all superstitiously, but only, as we express it, for a *token*, to remind us of our duty, and whose servants we are. It was used anciently as a public declaration of “not being ashamed of the cross of Christ;” and was intended to confirm us in the path of duty, by a recollection of Him whose sign we took, as it were, in our foreheads, and under whose banner we vowed to fight. Hence St. Cyprian, encouraging martyrs, says, “Arm your foreheads unto

¹ Ceremonies have more weight than is at first sight visible; they impress the imagination, and through it work more effectually upon the mind and memory, than the mere outward forms of them might lead us to suspect.

all boldness, that the sign of God may be kept safe;” where he reminds them of this sign of dedication, as a reason against apostasy. And though persecutions of that sort exist not now, as in the days of primitive Christianity, yet contumely and reproach against the cross of Christ do to a grievous extent still prevail, causing a need for every adventitious help to enable us to bear up against contempt. And hence, although it be the faith of Christ in our hearts that armeth with effectual courage, yet we consider this ancient custom as a good one, whereby the force of *imagination* operateth as a help and aid towards the making us not ashamed of the ignominy of the cross.

Neither ought this practice to be discontinued, on the sole ground that signings of the cross have been sadly and superstitiously multiplied amongst a certain party. Hezekiah¹, it is true, destroyed the serpent of brass when the Israelites superstitiously revered it. But this is no absolute rule, to destroy every thing simply because it has been superstitiously abused. It may be otherwise remedied. And as the brazen serpent, having answered its end, and being kept only as a *memorial* of past mercy, was necessarily destroyed, when the Israelites idolized it so far as to burn incense to it; so, on the other hand, the signing of the Cross, having *present good*, need not be utterly abolished,

¹ 2 Kings xviii. 3, 4.

inasmuch as we can remedy the evil of papistical multiplied and superstitious use of crossing, in *other* things, by simply discontinuing them.

The Papists, indeed, urge, in their adoration of the *material cross*, that they only do so because of the secret reference it hath to the person of Christ, and that the worship thus paid, is virtually paid to Him. Common minds, however, are not apt to comprehend these subtle distinctions, and from such practices are prone to fall into absolute idolatrous worship of the thing itself; and hence, after the practice of Hezekiah, such a stumbling-block should be removed.

But between the cross which superstition actually *worshippeth*, and the ceremony of signing the cross at Baptism only, as a mere *token* of remembrance, there is a vast difference; and from the gross abuse in the former there arises no necessity to dispense with the latter, harmless in itself, and yet conducive in some respects to good; neither, indeed, is it a sound practice to attempt to cure evils by extreme contrarieties, *e. g.* to exchange prodigality for covetousness; for this is only to substitute one vice for another. Hence the cure for superstitious observances is not to run into a profane disregard of holy rites and customs, and to an utter abscission of them, merely because they may have been abused; but judiciously to bring them back to their original intention.

LXVI. *On the Scriptural character of CONFIRMATION after Baptism.*

IT was an ancient custom of the Church, after Baptism, to use imposition of hands, with effectual prayer for the illumination of God's Spirit, to confirm and perfect that which the grace of the same Spirit had already begun in Baptism.

Prayer is a means of grace as well for ourselves, as for others, on whom our prayers draw down God's blessing; and in this latter case, it hath been an ancient custom, on solemn occasions, to *lay hands* on the party prayed for. Thus Israel blessed Joseph's sons, imposing his hands upon them when he prayed¹; and Christ himself, in the case of the young children, "laid his hands upon them and blessed them".

After our Saviour's ascension, the Apostles continued the custom of conferring spiritual gifts by imposition of hands². But though miraculous powers were thereby conferred on believers, yet these had no power to communicate them to others; they might, indeed, instruct and even baptize, but confirmation in miraculous gifts appears to have been confined to the Apostles³. And, as we learn from the Fathers, that miraculous powers were continued in the Church for

¹ Gen. xlviii. 14.

² Mark x. 13.

³ Ib. xvi. 17.

⁴ Acts xix. 6.

a limited period after the Apostles' times, yet the *conferring* of such seems to have been restricted to the Apostles' successors, viz. the Bishops.

And when miraculous gifts ceased, the Fathers, nevertheless, held the practice of imposition of hands with prayer, as a profitable Apostolic ordinance, calculated to draw down *ordinary* gifts and graces in a further degree upon the persons already "purified and blessed by the waters of Baptism¹," which rite Confirmation generally followed close upon. Their being *disjoined*, arose from the Apostolic practice of confirmation being restricted to Bishops; for indeed we know that when Philip had baptized, Peter and John were sent for to *confirm*; and hence ministers of inferior degree having baptized, the Bishops (as St. Jerome says) used "to go abroad, imposing hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost on those whom Presbyters and Deacons, far off in lesser cities, have baptized."

Another cause of severance arose from the practice of infant baptism. Children having received the gift of grace in Baptism, and living in Christian families, were regularly trained by precept and example; and a good foundation was gradually laid, against the time when they should be required faithfully to discharge their duties as Christian men. And when this period of maturity arrived, being thus edified by

¹ Tertull. de Baptism. c. 8.

Christian training, then Confirmation was given by imposition of hands, and prayer for their further blessing and edification; a practice which the success of Patriarchs, Prophets, Priests, Apostles, and Fathers, in their particular benedictions, may well warrant us in continuing, and which great blame lieth at the door of those who neglect, as is too often the case in these times. For it is indeed, in spite of trivial objections raised against it, manifestly a profitable *rite*, warranted by Apostolic practice, (though not, in consequence, a sacrament,) calculated to bring additional grace: and as the Apostles had their first gifts of the Spirit¹ augmented to them afterwards², so, by Confirmation, the first grace of Baptism is cherished and strengthened to the recipients thereof.

LXVII. *On the Sacrament of the EUCHARIST.*

As in Baptism we have the *origin* and commencement of Divine life, so in the Eucharist we receive that nourishment which is necessary to its *continuance*. In our present state of spiritual warfare, we need constant supplies of grace. In the future life, indeed, soul and body shall be without decay, our souls more require this sacrament than our bodies a food; but whilst we are in life, our Lord's remain in full force, "Except ye eat the flesh

¹ John xxi. 23.

² Acts i. 8.

of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you .” Such as will live the life of God must “eat the flesh and drink the blood” of the Son of man; because without it we cannot spiritually live. And whereas in our infancy we are incorporated into Christ by Baptism, and receive the grace of His Spirit without being conscious of it; in the Eucharist we receive the same gift of God’s grace in such a manner as, through faith, to understand its efficacy, to recognize Christ in it as the strength of our life already begun in Him, and to perceive and feel, not by surmised imagination, but truly and really, that we do receive supplies of Divine life, in the body and blood of Christ sacramentally presented.

It being generally admitted that there is this *real participation* of Christ, and of life in His body and blood, by *means of this sacrament*, and that the *soul of man* is the receptacle of the Divine presence; disputes have, however, unhappily arisen on the matter; and the question has been earnestly and even bitterly mooted, whether Christ be in the Eucharist, taken whole *within man only*; or whether His body and blood be in the very *external elements*? In which latter case, He must be received either *consubstantially*, *i. e.* by an invisible *moulding up* of Him in the elements;

¹ John vi. 53.

or by *transubstantiation*, i. e. the actual *change* of the elements into His real body and blood.

Now, it would be well if men were content to receive the acknowledged blessing and gift of grace with silent gratitude, without curiously attempting to investigate *how* it was communicated; for the only effect of prying into such mysteries, is to cool the warmth of feeling for them. And much better would it be for us to imitate herein the Apostles, who,—when the Eucharist was first instituted, and the Saviour blessed the elements which were to be (as the conveyers of His body and blood) the instruments of *life*, not only to them, but particularly to all that particularly received thereof, through them and their successors, in every subsequent age,—did only devoutly and reverently admire; and who,—when He gave them these blessed elements, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body : drink ye all of this ; this is my blood,”—received them with all comfort, gratitude, and joy; and thereby taught us, that this heavenly food is given for the satisfying of our empty souls, and not for the exercising of curious and subtle speculations.

Indeed, the Apostle’s explication of our Saviour’s words is sufficiently plain: what Christ calls “my body,” the Apostle styles “the *communion* of my body;” and what the Saviour states to be “my blood,” the Apostle terms “the communion of my blood:” evidently teaching that the sacramental bread and

wine are called “His body and blood,” inasmuch as they are the *instrumental means* whereby a real communion or *participation*¹ of His body and blood ensueth to the recipient, who is thereby incorporated, by a divine and mystical union, with Christ. Hence, there is a *real presence*, albeit not in the external elements, but in the worthy receiver thereof.

The sacraments indeed *exhibit*, but do not in themselves *contain*, the grace which God pleaseth to convey along with them. The acknowledged grace of Baptism is not in the *elemental water*; why should the grace of the Eucharist be held to be in the elemental bread and wine? No part of Scripture asserts this to be necessary. There being a real participation of Christ by every worthy recipient, it is enough; all curious inquiry into the mode *how*, is unprofitable and superfluous. And by this sacramental participation of Christ, even in His *whole Person*, as mystical Head, every such recipient becomes a mystical member of Christ; to him Christ gives the Holy Spirit of sanctification; he fully enjoys whatever merit and virtue there is in Christ's sacrificed body and blood,—the whole effect whereof is a *real transmutation* of our souls and bodies from sin to righteousness, and from

¹ The cause being put for the effect: just as when Christ is styled our *life*, He being the cause of spiritual life to us; so the elements are called His body and blood, being the causes whereby His body and blood are verily communicated.

death and corruption to life and immortality: and all this by the omnipotent power of Him, who maketh the humble elements of bread and wine the blessed means of fulfilling His own precious promise¹.

In this sense, and no other, the Fathers maintained a real presence: a *mystical* participation of Christ, working an effectual transubstantiation or change in *us*, both of soul and body, from death to life. Neither a corporal consubstantiation of Christ with the elements, nor yet a transubstantiation of those elements into His actual body and blood, was ever held by them, or can be proved from their writings: the *mystical* communion was what they ever taught.

There are, then, on these words of Christ, "This is my body," three interpretations: the Lutheran one of *Consubstantiation*,—that "the bread is, before participation, really the natural substance of His body, in virtue of the co-existence which His omnipotent body has with the consecrated element;" the Popish one of *Transubstantiation*,—that "the words of consecration abolish the substance of the bread, and substitute Christ's true actual body;" and the Sacramentarian one,—"that the consecrated element, through the *concurrence* of Divine power, is unto faithful receivers

¹ The declaration of Christ himself, when He gave His disciples to understand that His flesh eaten "profited nothing" (John vi. 63), and that the words which He spake gave life, clearly evinces that it was a mystical participation of Him which gave life.

the instrumental cause of a *mystical participation* of Christ, whereby they receive all the saving grace which His sanctified body can yield." And as this last contains nothing but what the others acknowledge,—nothing but what Christ's words teach,—nothing but what the Church of Christ always deemed necessary,—nothing but what is sufficient for a Christian to believe herein, and wherewith all Christian confessions agree,—how much wiser it is to dismiss such subtleties as contradict our senses, or perplex our minds; and to cleave to this, whereto, after all, their arguments do all point; and wherein, as it were, *they all unite* to speak but one thing.

He that hath said of baptism, "Wash and be clean," hath said of the Eucharist, "Eat and live." Let us, therefore, laying aside all carnal, curious inquiries about what is far beyond us, thankfully partake of His ordinance, in all the simplicity of faith, fully assured that He will therein, by His own power, fulfil His own special promise; so that, with the sacred elements which we take in faith, we shall also *verily receive* the body and blood of Christ, as a medicine to heal our spiritual maladies, to purge our sins, and to conform us to His own image in righteousness and true holiness, to the eternal welfare of our souls. Hence, whatever be the various opinions of men on these two sacraments in other points, the whole Chris-

tian world *in this* is agreed,—that *they are necessary* : the one to initiate, the other to continue and perfect, our life in Christ Jesus.

LXVIII. *On sundry alleged FAULTS in our Communion Service.*

SUNDRY faults have been found with the Church of England, as to her administration of the Eucharist. 1st. That she does not administer *generally*, saying, “Take, eat,” but *particularly* to each individual, “Eat thou, drink thou;” 2nd. That her communicants *kneel* at its celebration ; 3rd. That she does not specifically prepare and *examine* them previously to admission at the Lord’s Table ; 4th. That she admits *Papists* before they have purged themselves from suspicion of Popery ; 5th. That she suffers *a few* of her congregation to communicate, whereas she ought to use means to compel all to come ; 6th. That she permits it *privately* to the sick.

With regard to the *first* objection : since God by His sacraments applies the blessing of His grace to every man’s particular person, that form seems most appropriate, which best conveys the meaning of Gospel-promises. No fault is found with the specific individual application, “I baptize thee,” in the one sacrament ; why should not that in the Eucharist be the same ? The words of Christ, at its institution, are

recorded in brief historical terms; and there is no certain evidence, whether He spoke generally to all, or individually to each: and indeed, were it otherwise, so long as we keep to the spirit of His institution, we may use such a form as is more impressive and edifying,—more calculated to arrest the mind, and lead to devout and serious convictions; and this we conceive is done far more effectually by addressing each person individually, when he receives the sacred elements.

With respect to the *second*: we kneel, simply because that posture best befits us, as humble recipients of God's gracious bounty.

As to the *third*, regarding previous *examination* of communicants: albeit we do not reject such examination, should circumstances render it advisable, yet it is not deemed generally necessary for us to call others to account; they are rather strongly exhorted to that best method, viz. "to examine *themselves*" seriously, before they approach so heavenly a feast.

As to the *fourth*, which advocates the *rejection* of Papists from the Communion, because they are not (as is alleged) of Christ's Church: we would advert to the Apostolic distinction herein, which accounts those "who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to be His Church." And though there may be in that Church varieties in rites, strifes of opinions and schisms,—as there may be parts sound and sick in the

body natural,—yet it is His Church, so long as it holdeth the profession of *this vital substance of Truth*, which maketh it to differ from other religions, that acknowledge not “Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind.”

Indeed (as has been formerly shown) Hypocrites, and even wicked livers, Heretics, and Schismatics, albeit they belong not to God’s true spiritual and mystical Church, may yet be reckoned of the Visible Church; and nothing short of utter apostasy, and *denial* of the faith of Christ, can exclude from it. In the eye of God, those are against Christ that are not truly and sincerely with Him; but in our eyes, those must be received as with Christ that are not outwardly against Him. Moreover, there is a great difference between impenitent and notorious sinners, and those whose imperfection is only *error*; and that, too, error without pertinacity. Hence there is no valid ground in the objection; nor should we, through a blind indignation at Popish errors, repel from the mysteries of heavenly grace those Papists who seek them at our hands, and who may even thereby be actually brought forward in the path of truth and holiness.

•As respects the *fifth* objection, against our permitting a *few* of our congregations to communicate: we confess that the larger the number the better, and the more acceptable to God; we should, therefore, use all

methods of reasonable persuasion to accomplish a numerous attendance. But if from various causes, reasonable or not, men do abstain, the fault is theirs, the loss is theirs: only it would be a great injury to others, of better mind and feeling, to refuse them a means of grace because of the fault of others; or that the pious desire of a few should be unsatisfied, merely because others are careless or indevout.

Lastly: “Private Communion to the sick” is alleged to have sprung from two causes,—one erroneous, the other no longer existing: first, from a mistaken belief in primitive times, that whoever departed from life without ever having partaken of the Eucharist, could not possibly be saved; second, when, through the persecutions in those times, a person had apostatized, and having subsequently repented, was not yet received into full communion with the Church, if death came upon him, he nevertheless was permitted then to receive, for the comfort of his spirit, before his departure. Now, though persecutions exist not at present, yet there may be many cases where we may act mercifully, as in that just alleged: men may through various causes have been led away and deceived, and subsequently have had their eyes opened to see and acknowledge the truth, and to desire comfort from that which they before contumeliously despised: and shall we, in the hour of death, deny the oil of comfort to

their bruised minds? Indeed, generally, the soul of man at that hour needs support; and the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the surest prop to comfort them; and that Sacrament whereby a particular union and communion with Christ is effected, acceptable at all times, is then most cheering, most supporting,—elevating our desires, strengthening our faith of a glorious resurrection through Him, and filling us with all holy joy and consolation. Hence, our Church acts wisely, in not refusing to administer it at such a time.

LXIX. *On FESTIVAL-DAYS; their origin and object.*

GOD alone hath true eternity; being without limitation, *from* everlasting as well as *to* everlasting. All things else are limited, as in other things, so in *existence*: the quantum of their continuance is *Time*,—which may be considered as commencing with the instant of existence to the first created things, and to be measured by the motion of heavenly bodies; and hence, in consequence of their circular motions, *periods* of time will regularly return. And as God hath chosen to hallow some *places* above others by His extraordinary¹ presence, so in commemoration of certain of His extraordinary works, He has given a peculiar sacredness to certain *times*, which all that honour Him

¹ Exod. iii. 5.

are bound also to honour. Hence the Psalmist says, “This is the Day which the Lord hath made : we will rejoice and be glad in it ¹.”

LXX. *On the MODE of celebrating Festivals.*

SPECIAL observance and hallowing of days and times being therefore evidently natural and proper, the *mode* and *feelings* wherewith we should honour and designate them, is next to be considered ; and the expressions of the Psalmist just quoted, lead us to the conclusion, that Holy Festivals should generally be considered as seasons of *religious joy* ; wherein we set forth the praises of God, not in formal show, but with cheerful alacrity, that our own spirits may have a holy elevation,—express our warmth of heart, by an enlarged bountifulness, that others may thereby be made to rejoice and bless God,—and repose ourselves, by a relaxation from ordinary toils, that our minds may as much as possible be divested from fretting cares. Or, briefly, the elements of a Holy Festival are Praise, Bounty, Rest.

But in reference to this last, we must not mistake *rest* for *idleness*. Strictly speaking, God created nothing to be idle ; and the sense in which we wish rest to be taken here, is a ceasing from the meaner labour of the body, to enjoy the higher, holier, and

¹ Psalm cxviii. 24.

soul-elevating occupations of religious acts and contemplations. And hence, the Festival-rest is a sort of image and foretaste of that heavenly state of peace and joy, towards which all our hopes and wishes tend.

Indeed, Festivals seem to be suggested by a kind of *natural* feeling. Hence the Heathens had theirs, corrupt however and gross, in honour of their deities. And hence, in order to secure the Israelites from so evil an influence, God himself was pleased to appoint certain holy Festivals, to keep alive the memory of certain merciful dispensations; and also, the modes wherein they were to be observed¹. And, subsequently, the Jewish Church appointed two others,—the Feast of Purim and that of Dedication, mentioned by St. John².

And though, by the coming of Christ, the Law of ceremonial Ordinances is changed³; yet Festivals, being (as is shown) a natural mode of exhibiting religious joy, are not thereby abrogated; but are only *changed*, to meet the altered circumstances, and to

¹ 1 Chron. xxiii. 31.

² (Chap. x. 22.) These, it may be remarked, were observed by Christ himself; who thereby shows us that sacred Ordinances of *man's* appointment may be safely established.

³ St. Paul's words (Gal. iv. 10) render this sufficiently clear: though, at the same time, he by no means condemns *all* sanctification of days and times to the service of God and honour of Jesus Christ; only that we are not bound to *Jewish* times and modes.

commemorate certain extraordinary blessings. Hence we hallow the *first* day of the week, to commemorate the spiritual restoration of the world; as the Jews hallowed the seventh, in memory of its original creation.

And hence, commencing our Festivals with that of the Annunciation, we add thereto those of the Nativity, Circumcision, Purification, Resurrection, Ascension, Descent of the Spirit, and Mystery of the Trinity, as all relating to our one great Head.

And as He was glorified especially in the lives of some of His *disciples*, so we commemorate them: selecting, however, only the very chiefest,—as the blessed Apostles, the proto-martyr Stephen, the holy Baptist His forerunner; and besides these, we celebrate the holy Angels, the slaughtered Innocents, and the happy Souls now in fruition of heaven.

And all of these are evidently good. The first, indeed,—the *Sabbath*,—as being of divine appointment; and the others being occasions whereon “we dedicate and sanctify to God the memory of His benefits, lest forgetfulness and unthankfulness should creep upon us:” for which we have a warrant, in that He manifestly accepted the Festivals appointed by the Church, even under the Mosaic dispensation, as in the cases already mentioned, of the Feasts of Purim and Dedication.

LXXI. OBJECTIONS *against Festivals answered, and their UTILITY shown.*

AN exception has been taken against Festival-days, that they have a tendency to confine and limit religious feelings to certain periods ; whereas we ought *always* to be in a devotional state¹. Now, the Gospel of Christ does not require perpetual *exercise* of duties, but only a perpetual *disposition* or frame of mind inclining and prompting us to the exercise of them, whenever fit opportunities present themselves, or times require it. Duties of *all* sorts must necessarily have their several successions and seasons, and cannot in the nature of things be all discharged *at once* ; hence, in regard to all God's affirmative precepts, enjoining actual duties, it has been wisely expounded that they bind us *ad semper velle*, but not *ad semper agere* : we are to iterate them whenever occasions offer, but are not tied to their performance without intermission. Now, the institution of Festivals seems well suited to the constitution of the human mind : the constant habit of well-doing can only be attained by a custom of doing well ; virtue is to be perfected by a series of virtuous acts ; and religious feasts are calculated, as

¹ This is aimed particularly against our Easter, as being copied from the Jewish Paschal Feast ; but it is clear that Easter was kept in Apostolical times.

well to afford a good *beginning* of holiness to children and novices in religion, by the religious inquiries and ideas which they prompt and suggest; as also to strengthen and *confirm* religious and pious dispositions by their frequent recurrence, specially directing men's thoughts into channels of holy and religious joy. Hence they are singularly profitable, and call for our devout and regular observance.

It has however been objected, that God having left the six days in each week free to all men, it is not lawful for the Church to *abridge* any man of that liberty which He hath granted, by directing rest on Festivals, which He hath not enjoined, any more than it is competent for it to *countermand* that which He hath enjoined. Now, this argument carried out, would go to prove that *nothing* can be instituted by human authority: and that every man is left to the freedom of his own will, in every thing, except what God hath specially exacted or prohibited in His law: a thing plainly contrary to all the principles of civil government. Those things which the law of God leaveth arbitrary, and at liberty, must be subject to the laws of men; which laws, for the common good, must necessarily abridge each man's particular liberty, in some measure, as far as the rules of equity will permit,—otherwise all social order must be overturned.

But the objectors admit, that according to a general direction in Scripture¹, human authority *may* appoint special days of *Fasting*, when occasions of public calamity call for public humiliation before God; and hence, by *analogy*, we might conclude that the same might be done on occasions prompting grateful thanksgivings for deliverance or blessing. And indeed, the injunction of Moses to the Israelites, when, on occasion of their deliverance from Egyptian misery, he tells them to “remember this day²,” may seem as equally a general authority for the latter, as the words of Joel for the former.

Briefly, then, without attempting to answer endless objections, we may fairly conclude that the Law of God, as well as of Nature, allows days of rest and festival solemnity, in memory of signal mercies; that, in some cases, He has himself determined them; and, in others, hath left it to the wisdom of the Church, directed by precedents, and enlightened by other means, to judge what may be expedient. And instead of cavilling and disputing, we rather bless God for the manifest fruits which are daily reaped from such ordinances as His gracious Spirit prompteth our holy Church to appoint. On these grounds, we keep them with such marks of distinction as may clearly sever them from other days: not indeed with that servile,

¹ Joel ii. 15.

² Exod. xiii. 3.

rigorous observance which marked the Jewish modes,—which exalted forms above spirit, and literal adherence above the higher duties of charity,—and which thus called forth the Saviour's remark, “Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath ordained for man¹ ;” but we observe them with the better sacrifice of a reasonable, voluntary service,—with a joyful heart, and a grateful sense of God's mercies, exhibiting itself as well in praise and thanksgiving to Him, as also in sweet deeds of bounty to those about us; giving “glory to God on high,” and showing “mercy and goodwill towards men:” and, at the same time, preserving what not only constitute the outward dignity of our religion, but also are forcible witnesses of ancient truth², provocations to present piety, and shadows of future celestial happiness.

¹ Mark ii. 27.

² [An interesting corroboration of this is given in Smith's account of the Greek Church, 1680. “Next to the miraculous and gracious providence of God I ascribe the preservation of Christianity among them, to the strict and religious observance of the Festivals and Fasts of the Church: this being the happy and blessed effect of those ancient and pious institutions; the neglect of which would soon introduce ignorance, and a sensible decay of piety and religion, in other countries besides the Levant.” And he goes on to show how the striking and permanent impressions, made upon men's minds by the various Festivals in honour of the chief events of the Redeemer's life, coupled with the inquiries and conversations thereupon arising, help to keep and confirm them in the faith, and form their best preservative against the poison of Mahometan superstition.]

LXXII. *On Public and Private FASTS; Scripture-warrant for them, and advantages attending them.* .

HAVING thus spoken of Festivals, we now come to their opposites, viz. *Fastings*, or days of humiliation and sorrow : and these are either *voluntary*, according to men's own private feelings, or of *public obligation*, according to the wise regulations of the Church. These are not only grounded on the law of nature, but are acceptable to God, have been observed in all ages, and may beneficially continue to be so, to the world's end.

A mistake, however, should be noted at the outset, viz. that fasting hath no other object than the mere mortification and taming of the *body* : it hath indeed this, but it hath also something higher ; it is a work of reverence towards God ; and its object may be either elevation of mind or humiliation of spirit. The object of Moses' fasting, for instance, was divine speculation and contemplation of the mysteries of God ; that of David, was humiliation for sin and transgression.

Our life, therefore, being a mixture of good and evil, the Church of Christ, the most perfect school of all virtue, hath taught us how both to joy and to sorrow, as Christians ought ; and when that befalls which maketh us glad, our festival solemnities set forth our

rejoicing in Him who is the Author of all mercies : or when trouble is about us, then fastings with prayers show our condemnation of ourselves as the causes of our own misery, and our trust in His power and mercy to spare and to save.

It, however, argueth meanly of us, never to seek access to God, save under the smart of trial. And hence occasional sequestrations of ourselves for closer communion with Him are beneficial ; wherein the fact of the soul being elevated with sublime meditations may cause as great a forgetfulness of bodily wants, as even an excess of sorrow might ; and whereby we show our minds to be set on higher and heavenlier desires than things merely pertaining to the body¹. We read, indeed, that John's disciples fasted often : and our Saviour not only implied an approbation of voluntary fasts, in His precept, " When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites of a sad countenance ;" but, moreover, gave the promise, that when kept in a right spirit, they should " receive a reward : " only He condemned the hypocritical spirit wherein the Pharisees acted, and not the act of fasting itself.

With respect to public fasts amongst the Jews,

¹ The Apostle's argument (Rom. xiv. 3), on " meats and drinks not commending or discommending us unto God," hath no place here ; it only refers to the Jewish ceremonial distinctions of clean and unclean meats.

there are many examples in Scripture, both of those appointed by God on extraordinary occasions¹, and at statedly recurring periods²; as, likewise, of those appointed by the Jewish Church in memory of extraordinary visitations³. Besides, also, those weekly ones of Mondays and Thursdays throughout the year⁴.

When they fasted, however, it was not always exactly in the same manner; sometimes it was by a *total* abstinence from food⁵, and sometimes by a denial to themselves of *agreeable* food, as when Daniel fasted “three weeks of days, and ate no pleasant bread, neither tasted flesh nor wine⁶.”

As to Christian fasts, though St. Paul mentioneth private voluntary ones⁷, yet it doth not appear that the Apostles appointed any set public fasts. We may, however, incidentally infer, from our Lord’s words⁸, that they fasted when He was “taken from them,” and while He lay in the sepulchre⁹; more particularly,

¹ Judges xx. 26. 1 Sam. xxxi. 13.

² Levit. xxiii. 16.

³ Zach. viii. 19.

⁴ In these Fastings they seem to have confined themselves to bread, salt, and herbs, to which perhaps St. Paul alludes (Rom. xiv. 2). And though they did not fast on Festivals, yet it is probable that they kept the Sabbath *partly* as a Fast, not partaking of anything till the sixth hour or noon was passed: hence the force of St. Peter’s reasoning in Acts ii. 15.

⁵ Jonah iii. 7.

⁶ Dan. x. 2, 3.

⁷ 1 Cor. vii. 5. 2 Cor. vi. 5. Coloss. iv. 3.

⁸ Luke v. 35.

⁹ Good Friday and Easter Eve.

as we learn from Ignatius, that it was the practice of the Church to keep the two days before Easter as fasting days, and Easter-day also as a festival commemorative of the joy at Christ's resurrection. In time, this keeping of the two days' fasting was *weekly* amongst some Churches, even as the Sabbath was a weekly festival of the Resurrection: some Churches, however, did not keep the Saturday's fast, but changed it to Wednesday. Hence the public appointment of these things rests with the Church to determine, as occasions may seem to make most expedient; and the observance of them (leaving out all considerations of the efficacy of penitence and fasting in themselves, as a means of obtaining God's mercy in Christ) seems to be the duty of every Christian that wishes, by a peaceful and orderly conduct, to do honour to his profession, and avoid bringing discredit to the Church whereof he is a member.

It is true, that penitence is, even as prayer, acceptable to God at all times, be it in public or in secret; and hence some may urge, that it might be left to men's discretion when to use it. And yet we all know by experience, when such things are left entirely to men's inclinations, how frequently both the one and the other are neglected, and how much better it is that the Church should fix and appoint set times of penitence and humiliation, wherein her children should

be effectually reminded and drawn to such duties; that so the multitude of grievous transgressions, which even the most righteous in it commit, may not clean pass away unsorrowed for and unrepented of. Besides, there are frequent offences of a *public* kind, in our character of a religious body, or corporation of the Church, that need sorrowing for; even as such had a special sacrifice appointed for them under the law of Moses: and hence there is an evident necessity for some solemn public occasion to be fixed, whereon suitable acknowledgments and confessions may be made .

Feasts and Fasts, then, thus far correspond, that they have their foundation in *natural feeling*; and hence they have been observed by Heathens as well as Christians; joy being the cause of the one, grief of the other. They are neither of them acceptable to God simply in *themselves*, but only according as the heart and mind are right towards God in their performance: they have both been frequently abused by men's false estimate and wrong practice of them: they are both calculated, nevertheless, for the good of man; and yet man is not so tied to them, as that circum-

¹ The Commination, in the service for Ash-Wednesday, is an admirable preamble to a Public Confession-day; and seems to warrant the inference, that a *body* suitable to such a head was in contemplation, when it was drawn up, "towards the greatly-wished-for restitution of primitive Church discipline."

stances may not sometimes relax their obligation: and, as in Festivals, regard should be had to some men's necessity for labour to supply bodily want; so also in Fastings, regard should be given to their bodily weakness, lest by too much rigour they should suffer harm in endeavouring to do good. The discipline of *Fasts*, however, seems more necessary to be urged than that of Festivals; inasmuch as the occasions requiring it are more frequent, as well from the frequent recurrence of our sins, as also because troubles are more numerous in the world than joys: and, moreover, we are naturally disinclined to that which is grievous to flesh and blood, albeit it may be medically good for the soul; so that both Solomon, and a greater than Solomon, judged mourning better (spiritually considered) than feasting¹. Fasting and austerity of life have always been held in estimation, whether morally or physically considered, as tending to restrain the sensual appetites, and to inure the body to hardship: as the opposite practice tends to render men licentious and ungovernable, from an over-fulness and pampered state.

Hence the Church appoints Fasts, to keep alive the memory of signal punishments, and the sinful causes thereof, that men may be thereby warned; and also to discipline them to frugality of living; to undermine licentiousness; to exhibit to the poor what

¹ Eccles. vii. 4; Matt. v. 4.

may tend to content them somewhat with their own fasts of necessity, when they see the rich voluntarily undergoing them ; and also, finally, to give a public example of Christian humility being necessary for all equally ; as on other occasions, praise and thanksgiving are the duty of all.

LXXIII. *On the Ceremonies in our MARRIAGE SERVICE.*

THE continuance of society on earth, by replenishing it with inhabitants, and furnishing saints for heaven afterwards, depends upon the union of man and woman ; and God, therefore, left not man to be alone. But because things absolutely *equal* are indisposed to be directed one by the other, woman was formed not only *after* man in time, but inferior in excellence ; and yet this in such sweet proportion as to be more readily perceived than defined.

And as the offspring of man requires more trouble and time to bring it to maturity, because being of greater price than that of any other creature, the bond of union between man and woman must, therefore, be stringent and indissoluble. Indeed wedlock seems always to have been accounted something religious and sacred¹, even by Heathens².

¹ The Hebrews termed their marriage rites "conjugal sanctifications."

² *Τους ιερούς γάμους*.—Dionys. Antiq. lib. 2.

Some customs in our marriages have been found fault with; such as restraining them from being celebrated during times of public fast. But surely, as Scripture saith, there is “a time for all things¹ ;” and the festive joys of weddings seem strangely incongruous with the mournings of humiliation. Our custom also of delivering up the woman by her father, or friend, is consistent with ancient practice, and seems very significant of the duty of submission incumbent on the sex. The giving of a ring seems likewise a fit and emblematic rite, serving as a token of purposed endless continuance in that state, and as a pledge of conjunction in heart and mind.

But the phrase, “With my body I thee worship,” is the thing most objected to. Omitting, however, other explanations of this, it may suffice to observe, that the ancient difference between a lawful *wife* and a *concubine*, was only in the *purpose* wherewith a man betook himself to the one or the other. If it were merely for association, no worship or honour² accrued to her; but if he meant to make her a lawful wife, he then professed to give her respect and due dignity; and the consequence of the declaration of such wor-

¹ Eccles. iii. 1.

² This is the proper meaning of the old English word “worship,” viz. “honourable regard.” See also our Prayer-book version of the Psalms, wherein it is said, “The Lord will give grace and *worship* to them that lead a godly life” (Psalm lxxxiv. 12).

ship or honour was, that her children became legitimate, and herself was advanced to be the mother over his family, and a participator in his property, as is also further explicated by the subsequent phrase, "With all my worldly goods I thee endow." As to the objection against the advising the Eucharist to be received by the new married couple, it may well be replied, that nothing could be more suited to so important a solemnity, as that the parties thus united should show their union of faith by joining in that holy sacrament.

LXXIV. *On CHURCHING of Women.*

THE Churching of Women hath been found fault with, as an uncalled for ceremony, but surely without reason; for although daily mercies call for constant thanksgivings, and these cannot be all publicly paid by all; yet there are some occasions wherein a special act of grateful praise seems required; amongst these, a prominent one seems to be the safe deliverance of woman from such a travail and danger as child-birth; and a public acknowledgment for such a signal mercy must surely be acceptable to God. Her temporary absence from the Church savours of no Jewish rite of purification, or of a superstitious idea of unholiness; but is a mere decent observance of custom, to abstain

from public assemblies for awhile; as also her decent attire wherein to appear, and the trifling oblation to the minister, are equally unobjectionable in a reasonable point of view.

LXXV: *On our BURIAL SERVICE.*

WITH regard to the objections raised against our Funeral rites and customs, it may be observed, that they seem but a natural mode of showing our love for a deceased one, and of doing him a last honour as a man; and more particularly of comforting survivors, by reminding them of the joyful hope of a resurrection. Mourning for the dead is everywhere sanctioned in Scripture, as it is even by the Saviour's example at the grave of Lazarus; and an outward garb of woe, indicative of inward sorrow, seems also neither unsuitable nor opposed to ancient custom¹. Indeed, honouring the dead seems to have been at all times a part even of natural religion, and, amongst the Jews, to have been shown by embalmings and adorning of sepulchres².

Neither, as the Heathens were wont to have their funeral orations, and the Jews their funeral poems, is it unsuitable for Christians to have funeral sermons. The death of saints is precious in God's sight, and at

¹ 2 Sam. xv. 30.

² John xix. 40. Matt. xxiii. 27.

such a time they may minister comfort as well as edification to survivors.

But the chief object of all, in our rites of burial, is to exhibit and declare a token of our faith in the resurrection of the dead; and instead of leaving the corpse in unseemly neglect, to make its deposit an occasion of stirring up the minds of the living to devout and serious reflections. And indeed, whether or not any sanction can be drawn from the practice of the people of God under the Law¹, or of those in Apostolic times, the Church surely is not deprived of discretion or power to determine in a matter so plainly accordant to decency, and tending to spiritual comfort and edification.

LXXVI. *On the CHRISTIAN MINISTRY; its object
and use.*

WE now come to consider the subject of the Christian Ministry, the object whereof is God's glory and man's salvation.

But religion contributes also to man's temporal good, as well as his future happiness; and the peace and prosperity, as well of individuals as of states, is intimately connected therewith; so that the priest is a pillar of that constitution, wherein he faithfully

¹ Modern Jews have funeral prayers and funeral sermons, from which we might *infer* at least that it was their custom anciently.

serveth God. For though the wicked may sometimes be permitted to prosper; yet these, having no sense of God's providential goodness, and having their heart's love set upon worldly things alone, cannot be said to have the *proper enjoyment* of their temporal blessings: this belongs only to those who esteem them according to their real nature; not resting or staying thereon, but using them as instruments towards some higher good. And it is a gross, *miserable delusion*, in those base politicians that imagine the good of a Commonwealth to consist merely in the abundance of temporal things, without reference to the religion and morality of its people.

Whilst, however, godliness hath the "promise of this life, and also of that which is to come," the former must be taken *relatively*, and certain limitations must be made. In man's present fallen condition too much prosperity might be injurious; and afflictions are sometimes needful and beneficial, so that the nobler part, the soul, may thereby be disciplined and trained to greater perfection: and, briefly, *he* may be deemed truly happy, *not* to whom no calamity happens, but whom no prosperity, nor yet adversity, is able to move from a *right mind*.

On the whole, then, whether viewed individually or nationally, it may safely be pronounced, from the

results of experience, that welfare even on earth mainly depends on true religion.

This holds good, not only from a consideration of Heathen history, but more especially from that of the Jews, and perhaps not less so from that of Christians. Wherefore it is every Christian man's duty to labour to uphold true religion¹. And this specially is the duty of Christian kings and princes, the chief glory and admiration of whom amongst men will ever be, if they have reigned virtuously, if honour have not filled their hearts with pride, and if the exercise of their power have been service and attendance upon the majesty of the Most High; if they have feared *Him*, even as their own subjects fear *them*; if they have tempered justice with mercy; and if the true knowledge of themselves hath humbled them in the sight of God. These, indeed, are the happiest even of the mightiest; and there ariseth unto them not only an individual inward happiness, but outward blessings also concur, to interweave, as it were, earthly with heavenly felicity. There is a power in religion to shield from calamities, or to conduct safely through them; to give honour and wealth, or to turn the very withholding of them to beneficial ends.

But religion is not able to plant itself, nor to pro-

¹ See also page 132 for more on this head.

duce those fruits without the help of a Ministry; and, therefore, the Church (the works of grace and of nature herein assimilating) requireth *means* and *instruments*, subordinate to God's Spirit, for its establishment and support, that the household of God may be duly ordered, and that its members may have set before them the sovereign medicines of light and grace.

LXXVII. *The Clergy a DIVINELY-APPOINTED Order; on the Ordination expression, "Receive the Holy Ghost;" and on the motives in seeking Holy Orders.*

THIS Ministry in things divine, being a function instituted by God himself, may not be assumed by men, except authority be given them in a lawful manner. He who gave us the light of heavenly truth hath ordained certain persons (for it could not possibly be the business of *all*) to administer to the rest for the good of the whole; and whether, therefore, they hold their office immediately from Him, or mediately through the appointment of the Church, they are His ministers, and have their authority from Him, and not from men. Being Christ's ambassadors, they act under His commission; and the virtues of their high and holy function, such as preaching the Word of Life, administering the grace of Baptism, and giving the Bread of Life, are such as clearly none but God can bestow. Those who are thus consecrated to God's

service, are thereby *severed* from other men, and form a distinct *order*; even as St. Paul maketh the difference in the Church of Christ, calling one part thereof *ἐκκλησία*¹, *laity* or private persons, in opposition to ministers or clergy; to which latter certain powers and jurisdictions necessarily belong.

Those who have once received these powers are not at liberty to put them off, or resume them, at their own will; they are consecrated to God; and it is not in the power of man to dissever what God, by His authority, hath coupled. Suspensions, indeed, may stop, or degradations may cut off from the exercise of powers, for misdoings, (even as separation may take place in matrimony,) but they cannot annul the indelible *character* that was originally imparted.

Serious objections have been raised to the phrase in our Ordination service, "Receive thou the Holy Ghost." Now the "Holy Ghost" may signify not the Person alone, but also the *gifts* of the Spirit; and, again, spiritual gifts do not only imply *miraculous* powers, but also the very *authority* which is given men in the Church to be ministers of holy things; and, therefore, he that actually giveth such authority may reasonably use the form of bestowal.

Moreover, our Saviour himself used the self-same words, when, after His resurrection, He gave to His

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 16, 23, and 24.

Apostles their commission ¹; and after declaring, “As my Father sent me, so send I you,” breathed on them, and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost ².” Now, there must have been at the time a *real donation* of some kind: it was not miraculous power, for that was to be *afterwards* ³. What other gift, then, is more probable than the one mentioned in immediate connection therewith ⁴, “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted; whose sins ye retain, they are retained;”—a power of castigation and relaxation of sin, the giving of which fulfilled the promise formerly made, that His Apostles should have the “keys of the kingdom of heaven ⁵.”

We use Christ's *words*, therefore, but not His action of *breathing*; because we are only delegates, and neither Spirit nor spiritual authority proceeds *directly* from us: but, at the same time, we are persuaded that He who originated the form, will confer on him that receiveth the function the promised gift; and that the Spirit shall be “with him, and in him,” for his comfort and support in the faithful discharge thereof. And what a sacred dignity and grace is thus given to the Ministry, that the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour gave at His first ordinations, doth *concur* with spiritual vocations in all ages, even as the Spirit which God

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19.

² John xx. 22.

³ Luke xxiv. 49.

⁴ John xx. 23.

⁵ Matt. xvi. 19.

derived from Moses to them that assisted *him*, did descend from them to their successors in authority and place. So that all our ministerial functions, as dispensers of God's mysteries, are not ours, but the Holy Ghost's ! Enough is this surely to banish whatever might be deemed corrupt, either in bestowing, using, or esteeming the same, otherwise than is meet.

It has been thought doubtful by some, whether such an office of dignity may be *sought* for by any man without offence ; and that men should remain quiet at home “until the voice of God, or some circumstances occurring, seem to call them to such a charge.”

Now (omitting other remarks, as that the burden of the office itself, and the sort of contemptuous reproach that some throw upon it, preclude all imputation of ambition), it may be observed, that the work whereunto this power serveth is commended, and the desire thereof is allowed by an Apostle to be *good*¹ ; and if the desire itself be so, why may not the profession of that desire be good likewise ? and, consequently, the necessary means to be taken for its proper accomplishment. Even thus acted the Prophet Esaias, when, in answer to the heavenly vision, “Whom shall I send ?” he cried, “Lord, here am I, send me² !” And as to the appointment of *set times* for solemn Ordination, it is but a necessary orderly mode of useful expediency.

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 1.

² Isaiah vi. 8.

Neither are inferior motives, such as decent honours and legitimate emoluments for our conscientious labours, entirely to be excluded, in the desire of such an office ; only it behoveth to take great care herein, lest affection for that which hath in it both difficulty and goodness, pervert our judgment as to our own *fitness*, and thus we should eventually find *repentance* therein instead of contentment.

Indeed, it does not always follow, that those who seem to draw back from preferment, do act entirely from *humility* ; there may be a latent spiritual pride and vanity in many such cases ; and the best rule seems to be that of the middle way, neither to pursue such things *without conscience* ; nor yet from reserve and secret *pride*, to withdraw utterly from them.

LXXVIII. On DISTINCTIVE DEGREES *amongst the Clergy ; Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Other Church offices not properly ORDERS.*

UNDER the Law, it pleased God to choose one tribe out of the twelve,—that of Levi,—to the functions of the ministerial office. And this tribe had not all the same duty, nor were all equal in dignity ; Aaron and his successors being High-Priests over all, and the rest arranged in various grades below them, severally to discharge their respective sacred duties according to specified directions. Besides these, there

were some called of God *specially*, from any of the tribes indiscriminately, at various times, termed *Prophets*, who foreshowed things to come, and counselled in such matters as the Law did not advert to; and some there were, also, chosen of men, as transcribers and readers of the Law, afterwards called *Scribes* and *Expounders*.

Under the Gospel of Christ, the whole body of the Church being divided into Laity and Clergy, the latter are subdivided into Presbyters and Deacons. The term *Priest*, which is sometimes used, originally meant a person who offered sacrifice: and the Fathers of the Christian Church usually termed the ministry of the Gospel a *Priesthood*, in regard of what it hath *proportionable* (or analogous) to ancient sacrifice, viz. the "Communion of the body and blood of Christ," although it have now, properly speaking, no sacrifice.

It mattereth however little, whether we use the terms Presbytership, Priesthood, or Ministry, although perhaps, Presbyter might seem more suitable than Priest. For believers, being the adopted sons of God, and Churches the families of God, those, through whose ministry we are admitted into such relationship, may well have the reverend name of Presbyters or fatherly guides. In the New Testament they are nowhere called Priests; and, according to its language, a Presbyter is "one unto whom our Saviour,

Christ, has communicated the 'power of spiritual procreation,'² to be a spiritual father. Out of the twelve Patriarchs issued the family of God in Israel; and the twelve Apostles are the patriarchs of His family in Christ. And thus, in the book of Revelations, we read of twenty-four Presbyters sitting¹, one half the fathers of the Old Jerusalem, the other of the New. Hence the Apostles gave themselves the title³, in common, however, with others.

Presbyters were not all *equal* in degree; they varied according to the measure of their qualifications. The peculiar charge of the *Apostles* was to publish the Gospel of Christ to all nations, and to deliver His ordinances by *immediate revelation from Himself*. This pre-eminence being excepted, to all other offices incident to their order they had power to consecrate whom they thought meet, even as our Saviour appointed seventy disciples as *inferior Presbyters*, but yet whose commission to preach and baptize was the same as the Apostles had³.

To these two degrees of Presbyters, appointed by our Lord, His Apostles afterwards added *Deacons*, whose original office was the distribution of Church

¹ Rev. iv. 4.

² 1 Pet. v. 1.

³ Hence when the Christian converts became so suddenly numerous, as we read, (Acts ii. 41—47,) there was, in consequence, a sufficient number of Presbyters to minister to them. No doubt His prescience of this might be the cause of His appointing the seventy.

goods amongst the poor, attendance upon Presbyters during divine service, and other matters of a similar kind.

The Church hath since extended the duties of Deacons, and hath licensed them to preach; and this on reasonable and Scriptural grounds and example. For the first occasions for which the Deaconship was instituted having ceased; as the Apostles appointed them to relieve themselves, when, in consequence of the increase of converts, their labour was too great; so Deacons were subsequently employed by the Church in other, but not unsuitable, services, and they remain to this time a degree in the Clergy of God, instituted originally by the Apostles of Christ.

Hence we see *how long* these three Orders have continued in the Church of Christ; the highest, that which the Apostles had; the next, that of the Presbyters; and the lowest, that of Deacons.

Prophets, such as Agabus¹, and others, were persons divinely inspired for some special purpose, and cannot be reckoned amongst the Clergy, inasmuch as they had not their power or authority by ordination, which alone can admit into the Clerical order.

Evangelists were Presbyters whom the Apostles sent abroad, and employed as agents in ecclesiastical affairs, wheresoever they saw need; such as Ananias²,

¹ Acts xi. 27; xxi. 10.

² Acts ix. 17.

Apollos ¹, Timothy ², and others; many of whom, we find, gave their possessions to the poor, and went travelling and preaching the Gospel to those that were strangers thereto.

Pastors and *Teachers* also were Presbyters with a *settled* charge, differing only in that from Evangelists³.

Hence it seems clear, that in Apostolical times the Church had only three degrees of Ecclesiastical orders; at the first, Apostles, Presbyters, and Deacons; and afterwards Bishops, who came in the place of Apostles. And to this the Fathers bear ample testimony: to quote but one,—Tertullian saith, “When your Captains,—that is to say, Deacons, Presbyters, and Bishops,—fly, who shall teach the Laity that they must be constant?”

An error hath arisen amongst some who confounded *services* and *offices* with Orders, and hence have reckoned catechists, readers, singers, &c., as Clergy. But though they may occasionally bear a part in sacred offices, yet when these are discharged, they are only

¹ Acts xviii. 24.

² 2 Tim. iv. 5—9.

³ Some indeed, from certain texts in the Epistle to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. xii. 28,) and in that to the Ephesians, (Eph. iv. 7, et seqq.,) would infer a much greater variety of Orders. But the whole tenor of Scripture considered, makes it plain that in those places there is only a distinction made, because of certain communications through the Spirit, of *special grace* to different individuals, for the mutual benefit of the whole; and by no means do they imply any peculiar Orders of regular appointment.

as the rest of the Laity, never having been admitted or tied to their office by irrevocable Ordination. The Church of England, therefore, hath only the same orders of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, which had their beginning from Christ and His Apostles themselves¹.

As for the particular *attire* or habit beseeeming each order to use, nothing further need be said, than that all well-ordered polities have judged it meet that different grades of men should have such distinctions for propriety's sake.

LXXIX. On CHURCH OBLATIONS, ENDOWMENTS, and TITHES; *their sacred and INALIENABLE character.*

THE practice of mankind but too often plainly confirms St. Paul's statement, that "covetousness is idolatry"; for we see them, instead of honouring God with their wealth, honouring wealth as a god; thinking their substance entirely to be spent upon themselves; or, at least, that if they convert some small contemptible part of their substance to His service, it is quite enough.

But as we are required to devote certain portions of our *time* to His service, we are equally bound to

¹ Deans, Archdeacons, Chancellors, &c., are merely sundry titles of office necessary for certain occasions, but in no way interfering with the constituted Degrees of Order.

² Col. iii. 5.

bestow certain portions of our *substance*; for our riches, as well as the days of our life, are His. Indeed, how else can we give honour to whom honour belongeth, or how else hath God the things that are God's? Hence it has ever been admitted, as a clear principle even of natural piety, that we are bound to honour God, not only by a lawful and proper *use* of our worldly goods, but by offering a *portion* thereof to Him, as a grateful acknowledgment that all we have is from His benevolence, and as a token of His sole and sovereign dominion over all; and, also, as a constant practical lesson, reminding us that the world is *not* our own free and absolute inheritance.

In reference to the *quality* of our gifts, they should be such,—respect being had to the circumstances of the offerer,—as beseem His glory to whom we offer them. Hence the fatness of Abel's sacrifice was commended¹; and even the Heathens inferred, that nothing might be consecrated which was *impure*, *unsound*, or *not truly their own to give*. And in respect of the *use* to which they should be applied; as God standeth in no *need* of them, and accepteth them only as a token of our piety, and in order that they may tend to the support of religion,—so our gifts, whether in obedience to Divine command, or proceeding from private devotional feelings to promote God's glory

¹ Gen. iv. 4.

by upholding true religion, must then be most acceptable, when they have for their object the *perpetual support* of that religion.

The first permanent donations of honour are *churches* for God's worship, which do most eminently forward religion; but of these it has already been spoken elsewhere¹. The next species of gifts are the *ornaments* of those Churches, memorials to remain as treasures in God's house, not only for present uses, but for the supply of future casual necessities; and to be testimonies to future times, that God hath in every age and nation those that love to honour Him with their substance.

The riches, first of the Tabernacle, and then of the Temple of the Jews, arising from voluntary gifts and donations, were enormous, and almost surpassing belief². These, however, became successively a prey to their different enslavers, the Babylonians and Romans.

Such being the casualties whereunto moveable treasures are subject, the next and more durable sort of

¹ See Section II. page 141, on Churches.

² "From the statement made in the first Book of Chronicles (ch. xxii. 14; and ch. xxix. 4—7), the treasures employed in the building and decorating of this splendid edifice must have been immense. It is generally admitted, that the *talent* there mentioned was of an inferior standard,—probably the Syriac one;—but even then, the gold and silver alone would amount, on the very lowest computation, to a *great many millions* sterling; besides all the valuable jewels and costly materials."—*Smith's Manual of Theology*, 2nd edit., page 540.

endowment is that of *lands*. And hence the Law of Moses required twenty-eight cities, with their lands in Judea, to be consecrated to God.

A further support for religion was directed in the form of *tenths*, or tithes; and as Abraham voluntarily gave tithes to the priest of God¹, and Jacob religiously vowed “tithes of all God should give him²,” so the Law of Moses required a tenth from each man, of whatever increase Providence gave him³.

By this general offering of tithes, the poorest may yield unto God equally in proportion with the richest, and religiously become *peers* with those to whom, in a worldly sense, they are inferior. Neither, after all, are such offerings *lost*, but they return to them again even with interest, through the blessing of God upon their substance, according to His own gracious promise⁴: so that whoever useth fraud in this respect, injureth not God, but only himself⁵; and the faithful rendering of them is “for our own good always.”

The Church of Christ gradually adopted and established the same mode as that under the Mosaic Law, of tithes, as being most natural and fit for the honour of God, in the support and perpetual maintenance of true religion; thus converting to eternal uses such

¹ Gen. xiv. 20.

² Gen. xxviii. 22.

³ Deut. xiv. 22.

⁴ Mal. iii. 10.

⁵ Hence the Jews were wont to name their tithes “the hedge of their riches;” the best and surest protection for them.

temporal things as are in themselves most transitory. And to prevent loss and injustice herein, the truest way is for them to be given to God in the *very self-same things* which, through His blessing, the earth doth yield, if it be possible; both because they thus come purer, as it were, to Him, and are given in their proper and actual value¹.

The chief thing, however, and the main foundation, whereupon the security of these things depends, is that whatever is given unto God, should *ever remain* His own inalienable possession: and this on the self-same principle whereon gifts or endowments are regulated between man and man. And though, therefore, by the Mosaic Law, we are no longer strictly bound to Tithes; yet when men have once given and devoted such things to God, then there can be no question about the necessity of their being duly paid: even after St. Peter's argument to Ananias², "Whiles it was whole, it was wholly thine;" but having been given, it was no longer so, nor was God to be then defrauded: and after the same reasoning, Tithes, having been once dedicated, are no longer our own, but God's.

There are abundant Scripture evidences under the Law, that what had been given Him was to be held *sacred*³; and these are clearly applicable, not to the

¹ See also Book VII., Section 22, for more on this head.

² Acts v. 4.

³ Mal. iii. 8; Ezek. xlv. 1, 4.

Jews alone, but to *all* that have honoured God with their substance,—whose gifts invest Him with the absolute ownership thereof, and which are therefore peculiar and holy unto Him. Hence it hath ever been held utterly impious, to impair or diminish from those possessions which have once been dedicated unto religious purposes: and there was formerly a peculiar form of solemn execration against those who attempted such sacrilege. Examples have been of prelates, even at the risk of their lives, heroically defending the sacred treasures against the cupidity of the ungodly: and, indeed, there seems to be a sort of natural abhorrence of *sacrilege*, and a belief that its perpetrators cannot ultimately prosper. Many plausible pretexts and colourings, therefore, have been put forth, to conceal such base designs; but, independently of the consideration that the defrauders of God must one day suffer, the conscious turpitude of the very act itself cannot fail, in the mean time, to act as a canker-worm, and prove a secret but sore punishment.

It is not held, however, that in no case whatever this rule can be relaxed, and that by no possibility any alienation can be made. Certain cases may occur, wherein we may presume that God is as willing to *forego*, for our benefit, what our Religion has honoured Him withal, as He is always to *convert* it to our benefit. But such cases require great and serious consideration

and circumspection ; for want whereof, the Church has often grievously suffered. And indeed the artifice of the Devil has brought it to pass, that Religion itself shall be, as it were, a persuader of sacrilege : for men, under the name thereof, assert that the best service to Religion will be to *sweep away all*, and leave the Church to its primitive poverty,—because riches forsooth have made her children wanton ;—and that, if we give God our hearts and affections, other offerings are useless, or better bestowed elsewhere ; that, in brief, to give unto God, is error ; and that reformation of error, is to take away from the Church what the blindness of former ages gave. And hence, such suggestions having been too frequently listened to, and too sadly acted upon, in certain parts of the Christian world, the best things have been overthrown ; not so much through the might of adversaries, as through *lack of counsel* in those whose duty it was to defend them.

LXXX. On TITLES *for Orders not always necessary, else MISSIONS could not be ; INDEFINITE Ordination a Primitive practice ; on the origin of LIMITED localities, or PARISHES.*

ALL the points connected with the office and character of a Minister may be included under these four : his *Ordination* ; his *Charge*, or portion of duty in the

Church ; his *Performance* thereof ; and the *Maintenance* he receiveth therefrom.

The first of these hath already been discussed. In respect to the second, it may be remarked, that as the great body of the people must necessarily be severed by separate precincts, so there seems a necessity for a division or distribution of Clergy amongst them.

Now originally, Religion settling itself first in cities¹, a sort of *Ecclesiastical College* was consequently set up in each, consisting of Presbyters and Deacons, under the direction of the Apostles, or their delegates the Evangelists : *e. g.* the Colleges of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Rome, Corinth, &c.—where the Faith of Christ was planted. The Charge of these was a *general* one: they went in common to all around, and no Presbyter had any *separate Cure*².

About the year 112, Evaristus, a bishop in the see of Rome, began to appoint *set precincts* to every Church, and to each Presbyter a certain portion, whereof he should have the sole spiritual charge³; and the convenience and benefit of this were so manifest, that in time all Christendom adopted it; and

¹ *Pagani*, or inhabitants of villages, therefore, being remote from the means of religious instruction, would necessarily remain longer in ignorance than citizens; and hence the term *Pagans* came to be used as synonymous with that of Infidels, or Heathens.

² Hence, to ordain *κατα πολιν*, through every city, and *κατ' ἐκκλησιαν*, through every Church, are synonymous expressions.

³ *Παροικια*, *parœcia*, *parish*.

about A. D. 636, our own Churches became similarly divided.

Some have been led into error, from not considering this original constitution of Churches ; and, thinking that by Church, some definite local charge is always necessarily implied, they object to a minister being ordained to any *indefinite* or general duty ; and hold, that he must have always some particular parish-church, with a particular flock or congregation. Now, this would at once prevent anything like *Missionaries* being sent to the Heathen ; and besides, leaving other considerations out of the question, the example of primitive times forms no warrant for the objection ; rather, as has already been shown, the indefinite Ordination of Presbyters and Deacons for promiscuous duty, is nearer to Apostolic practice than the other, which only began to prevail in the second century, about the time of Evaristus. Moreover, also, were their argument allowed, it would go to prevent all the singular benefits which arise from our noble *Universities* : wherein men are trained by special exercise of their understanding ; and after due opportunity for contemplation, come forth furnished with tried powers and abilities, to the honourable discharge of their functions in the Church. In short, Presbyters and Deacons are not ordained unto *places*, but unto *functions* : and for the discharge of these functions, they may be translated, on fitting

occasions, to different localities; always retaining the powers wherewith they were invested.

It may be well to bear in mind, that the Ordination of Ministers is quite a distinct thing from their Title, or Charge: the one invests them absolutely with certain *powers*; the other only respects *where* those powers may be profitably used: and, therefore, the regulations of the latter can in no wise interfere with the former. Now, by a misconception of our Canon laws, some have fallen into error on this point. For, since they who have once received Ordination cannot return to a worldly calling, it behoved those in whose power Ordination was, to impose some restraint upon admission thereto, so as to prevent the unseemliness of poverty and destitution amongst their Order, through a too numerous admission. And hence arose the regulation, not to ordain without a *Title*; that is, a nomination to some Benefice, from whence the minister might receive his support. But these very laws do admit ordination, if the party so to be ordained have a competent support of his own; or if the bishop agree to provide for him, till some other proper maintenance be found.

Hence it is plain, that our very Canons do not entirely forbid *Ordinations at large*; and in the present state of the Church, they are even necessary.

Indeed it may be well observed, that for a long period in the primitive times, there could be no such things as Benefices,—that is, fixed life-revenues; but Ministers were supported by their canonical portions of such oblations as the piety of Christians did yield: and even when separate flocks and churches were assigned to Ministers, they yet had only, for some time, portions out of the common stock of gifts and oblations, as before.

Again, when through the constitution of feudal laws, large territories of land were vested in one individual, it was impossible to build Churches thereon, and to parcel out Parishes, without consent of the owners; and it then became a matter of reasonable equity, to invest them and their heirs with the right of *presenting* to the Benefices such Ministers as the bishop might allow to be competent. Various circumstances, connected with increase of population and other causes, have created much inequality, and often rendered what was once a manageable Charge, or Title, utterly beyond the powers of one individual; and hence a necessity arose for stipendiary assistants, or *Curates*: the Benefice yet continuing one man's, though its duties require more. Thus much on Ordinations at large, and the expediency of Stipendiary Curates.

As to the election of Ministers by popular voice, that will be treated of elsewhere ¹; and the only duty necessary, previous to admission to Ordination, seems to be a knowledge of the party's worthiness, as well in learning, as also, and more particularly, in integrity and virtue.

LXXXI. *On the competent LEARNING of Ministers ; on their RESIDENCE ; and on PLURALITY of Livings.*

THE greatest obloquy, however, hath arisen from that three-fold blot of notable *ignorance* ; unconscionable *absence* from Cures ; and insatiable hunting after *preferment*. And these things, therefore, it behoveth us seriously to examine : and dispassionately to consider, as well how far they are reprobable by reason, and maxims of common right ; as also, whether certain exceptions, permitted by our Laws, are so utterly inconsistent therewith, as some choose to allege.

Against *Ignorance*, it hath been argued, that St. Paul requireth ² of Ministers “ability to teach, to convince, to distribute the word of God rightly :” against *Non-residence*, that they are “Shepherds” whose flocks are at no time secure ; “Watchmen,” whom the enemy doth at all times besiege ⁴; and are to be patterns of holiness, and counsellors and guides

¹ Book vii.

² 2 Tim. ii. 15 ; Titus i. 9.

³ 1 Pet. v. 2.

⁴ Ezek. iii. 17.

to their flocks : against *Plurality*, that as it and residence are incompatible, it is making religion a thing of filthy lucre.

And all this is true, in the *general* sense of the expressions. In a Minister of Christ there ought to be a competent knowledge of the doctrines and duties of his profession ; and not only knowledge, but faithful practice also, and zeal in his heavenly calling, whereto he is bound by a solemn oath before God, and the neglect whereof incurs a fearful penalty. On these points, the Scriptures contain both affectionate and strong exhortations¹ ; and also equally emphatic denunciations². Moreover, labours in a *general* way will not excuse *absence* from and discharge of specific duty, to those our respective flocks whereof the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers. And *Plurality* hath not only the evil of absence, but the imputation also of worldly-mindedness.

Hence it hath been objected, that our laws of *dispensation*, in such cases, involve a contradiction to *common right* ; and, consequently, a *nullity* of all such acts as proceed therefrom : and that, therefore, there is an *invalidity* in the Ordination of unlearned men unable to preach ; and also, in the permission given for Non-residence, and for *Plurality*.

¹ Acts xx. 28 ; 2 Tim. iv. 1.

² Jer. xxiii. 1. 4 ; Ezek. xxxiv. 2. 8. 10.

But it is a great mistake to say that *every privilege* is repugnant to common right, simply because it dispenseth with what common right doth generally prohibit. For it is universally admitted, that a general law doth never derogate from a *special* privilege; were it otherwise indeed, a general law being in force, there could be no special privilege at all.

There are always particular circumstances, in the varied states of mankind, which cause that *general* rules and axioms cannot apply equitably to all cases; and hence, even justice requires that there should be peculiar grants, or *privileges*, which at first sight may pethaps seem repugnant to justice. For instance, the law of common right bindeth all men to keep their compacts, and to fulfil the faith they have once given; so that if a man grown to discretion disadvantage himself, even by an unwitting bargain, he must nevertheless abide by it: but this does not hold with *minors*, who are exempt from the operation of the general law: so that equity and justice cannot apply the same rule to both; but the one is ordered by common right, and the other by special privilege. Now, privileges are either transitory, as merely attaching to an individual, and ending with him; or permanent, as belonging to *kinds* or *orders* of men, and not ceasing with any particular man or men.

There being, therefore, *general* laws, whereby the

Church of God standeth bound to provide, that her Ministers be *learned*; that they *reside* upon their charge; and that they do not scandalously *multiply* livings; it is to be considered, what the laws of the Church of England admit seemingly repugnant thereto.

There being, then, upwards of 12,000 learned men required for all the cures in the realm,—and neither the two Universities being able always to furnish an adequate supply, nor yet a fourth part of the Cures themselves able to afford a *sufficient maintenance* to learned men,—it seems a necessary consequence, that unless we would have the greater portion of the people without religious instruction at all, we must not look in all cases for men of extraordinary attainments, but those must be admitted who are *moderately* qualified in respect of learning. When, indeed, we speak of a learned man, we generally mean one who is *eminently* so; but when the law requires learning as a qualification for office, it must mean according to some *standard* of its own appointment; and this must be either a specification of particulars, or else a reference to the opinion of some competent judge.

Now, St. Paul requires such learning in Presbyters as shall enable them to exhort in sound doctrine, and to disprove what is unsound; not *defining* the measure of ability, but leaving it to the discretion of Titus and

others, his fellows. Suppose, then, we are unable always to procure such as the Apostles would have chosen; if we are content with a somewhat inferior degree of talent, and select those who may perform the usual offices of prayer and sacraments, and who may instruct by reading, although they have not ability to preach, we hold that the Apostle's law is not broken. We do the best that circumstances permit; and no one is bound to impossibilities. The question, indeed, is not whether learning be required, for that we admit and aim at; but whether a Church wherein there is not a sufficient store of learned men, in the strict sense of the word, to furnish every congregation, would do better to let thousands of souls grow savage, and leave them without either the ordinances or even the knowledge of the way of life, rather than (as is our practice) to admit such men as Presbyters who may be sufficient in all other points, save that they lack the *preaching-ability* which others may have. Of two evils we choose the least.

In respect of *Non-residence*, certain causes thereof are allowed by law. Liberty, for a time, is given to such as reside in the Universities, for the improvement of their knowledge and acquirements. And this may be beneficial even to the church itself: for their Charge is not left destitute, though they may be absent; their flock is not neglected; and they may

be meanwhile acquiring that, which will enable them eventually to be still more able and efficient instruments for saving souls. A similar argument may be applied in the case of those who are absent as Chaplains with bishops' families : in such schools of gravity and wisdom, they may be daily edified and prepared for greater usefulness. And with respect to Chaplains in noblemen's houses, we all know how much inferior things depend upon the good order of superior ones ; and if, by such a means, personages of high rank and influence may be brought to an increased knowledge and love of true religion, it will hardly be deemed advisable that those should be withdrawn (their cures not being meanwhile unprovided for, or left destitute) who may be the happy means in helping forward the good work.

Such, then, are some of the chief grounds whereon Non-residence is allowed. To some, that their knowledge may be increased, and their subsequent labours rendered more profitable to the Church ; to others, that the families of the great may not want opportunity for daily exercise of religion, whose very influence and example may be of infinite service to the cause of religion amongst inferior grades.

And another reason prevailed, both towards permitting absence from cures, and also—(what necessarily causeth it)—Plurality of Livings : viz. a desire

to *encourage and reward* eminent qualities and services. Hence, to Governors of Colleges, and residents in Cathedrals, with a view to enable them to sustain the burden of expenditure which their situations expose them to,—and to others, in consideration of worth and merit, and by way of honour to learning and nobility,—the law hath given leave, as well to supply their inferior place by deputy, (they themselves meanwhile discharging some higher duty;) as moreover, also, that men of certain high degrees and rank may have licence to hold more ecclesiastical livings than one.

It is too true, however, that these privileges have been much *abused*; and that the avenue opened for just reasons to some, lets in also corruptly those that were never *intended* to be admitted. And hence, through favoritism, or too great kindness, those are obtruded upon the Church sometimes, whose slender qualifications precluded all hope of their support in other ways, and whose unfitness brings no small disgrace to their order. And hence, likewise, the other privileges of Non-residence and Plurality have been abused, to the great detriment of the Church. But though this be so, yet the *abuse* of a privilege does not render it invalid.

A heathen philosopher¹ hath laid down a maxim, founded on the law of nature, “that no husbandman

¹ ARISTOT. *Polit.* lib. vii. c. 9.

or handicraftsman should be a priest;" because it was inconsistent with God's honour, that the hands of His ministers should be defiled with mean occupations: and yet, when the Apostle says¹, "These hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that are with me," did he in that case act repugnantly to the law of nature? Thus we see, that circumstances may allow *exceptions* even to *natural* rules: and hence, for the objectors to argue,—as in the cases of Learning, Non-residence, and Plurality,—that special and limited exceptions and privileges are repugnant to, and utterly inconsistent with, general rules, is an entirely false conclusion; and the assumed consequences of nullity of Orders, and invalidity of Dispensation, utterly erroneous.

Though the argument might end here, the just answer being given, yet it may not be amiss to look somewhat particularly into the cause and *source* of these objections and complaints. Now, these appear to be, a pestilent mischievous conceit, that the perfection of Christianity consists not, as formerly, in humble exercise of piety and reverent attention to God's Word, but in searching out other men's faults, and vaunting our own professions. Righteous men of olden days had for their object, *obedience*; professors of our times, *skill*: the former aimed at reformation

¹ Acts xx. 34; 1 Cor. iv. 12, &c.

of life ; the latter delight in reproof of vice : they, in their religion, exercised their knees and hands ; we, our ears and tongues : so that every religious duty, save only that of *preaching*, hath grown out of fashion. And moreover, in this their custom of considering sermons the sum total of religion, as they look upon a person lacking preaching-ability to be *no* Minister ; so also, if he hath the ability, but does not embrace some peculiar opinions, and hit the string of *their fancies*, then forsooth he is set down at once as an *unprofitable* one.

Now, the very expression of the Apostle which they allege, that a Minister should have ability “rightly to divide the word¹,” doth not mean any particular exposition of Scripture, (wherein, by the way, some through partial interpretation divide the *people*, instead of the Word ;) but it means a preaching of *sound doctrine*, in opposition to new-fangled opinions contrary to old established ones, which necessarily caused division. To prevent the evils arising from this, the Church of England hath sundry excellent methods : such as public readings and subscription of Articles ; declarations of assent to her Liturgy and Offices, before admission or investiture ; and rules of discipline for

¹ (2 Tim. ii. 15), where the word *ορθοτομειν*, “to divide aright,” seems to be used in contradistinction to *καινοτομειν*, “to divide after a new fashion.”

silencing those that disturb with new-fangled doctrines: and she deems it preferable to lack the labours of those that might disturb, rather than to endure the worse mischief of their inconformity to good laws.

Moreover, what causeth a *Minister* to differ from ordinary Christian men, is not (as hath been foolishly imagined) “sound preaching of God’s word;” but it is his being regularly and *canonically ordained* to his office, that constituteth him a lawful Minister, *as touching the validity of any act* appertaining thereto. Hence St. Paul’s special charge to Timothy for *caution* in ordaining; because imposition of hands maketh them Ministers, whether they have gifts and qualities or not. Besides, as hath already been said, preaching is not the *whole* of a Minister’s vocation: even as we know that St. Augustine admitted into his own Church a man of small erudition; considering that what he wanted in knowledge, might be compensated by his virtues,—which made his *life* a better orator than *more learning* could make those whose life was less holy¹.

True, it is a good thing to wish for proper qualifications in all Ministers; and for a redress of corrupt practices and abuses. At the same time, there is a

¹ Were *all* the priests after Moses (it may be asked) sufficient *learnedly* to interpret the Law? And if not, did their inferiority deprive them of their priestly character?

method of reason to be followed, in accomplishing this; and men who have licence by law, and depend on the good faith thereof, are not *rudely and suddenly* to be dispossessed, at the mere will of those that would set up for reformers herein. Indeed, the same rule of equity, in this respect, is to be followed in ecclesiastical as in civil matters; for in these latter, there are unfitnesses, and pluralities, and absences from office. Nevertheless, it would be thought highly unjust, to revoke all long-standing grants and immunities and privileges *summarily*, and without respect to persons or circumstances. Rather, following the advice of a judicious historian, should we avoid the mischief which a sudden abrogation might cause; and seek, by a provident care and circumspection, to repress their growth in future.

And for this good end, those who grant Ordination should, for the honour of Jesus Christ, and the good both of their own souls and of others, take good heed whom they admit: those who present unto Livings should, for the deliverance of their own souls in the day of judgment, be cautious, and consider what it is to betray for the sake of gain, the souls which Christ died to redeem: those who grant Dispensations should be heedful that only merit hath its reward, and not plant a thorn where a vine should

grow: those who qualify Chaplains, should not let their names be abused, contrary to the true intent of the laws: those who grant Degrees, should remember, that if, by their too great easiness, honours be given to the undeserving, the mischief done to religion will recoil upon themselves: and, lastly, those who enjoy any special privilege, should ever bear in mind the *grounds* whereon such have been granted,—that absence hath been allowed in the expectation of greater fruit to the Church through *industry elsewhere*,—and that Pluralities are permitted to testify our estimation of *worth and virtue*, according to the Apostolic rule, “They which excel in labour ought to excel in honour¹.” And therefore, unless they answer the expectation of the Church herein, and use their constant and best endeavours to sow because they reap, and to sow as much more abundantly as they reap more abundantly than others, (to which condition they do virtually bind themselves by their acceptance of such things,) the honey which they thus eat, shall in the end be turned into very gall.

Hence it hath been shown, that maxims of *common right* are only against the practices in question indefinitely, and not universally and without exception; and that, therefore, special privileges are not repug-

¹ 1 Tim. v. 17.

nant thereto: that when privileges have grown into abuse, there must be redress, but not a summary violent abrogation of them, either wholly or in part; but that the best method would be, such a voluntary reformation, on all hands, as may prevent them in future.

BOOK VI.

CONTAINING THEIR FIFTH ASSERTION, "THAT OUR LAWS ARE CORRUPT, AND REPUGNANT TO THE LAWS OF GOD, IN MATTERS BELONGING TO THE POWER OF ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION; IN THAT WE HAVE NOT THROUGHOUT ALL CHURCHES CERTAIN LAY-ELDERS ESTABLISHED FOR THE EXERCISE OF THAT POWER."

I. *On the alleged right of LAY-ELDERS to possess spiritual jurisdiction.*

WE now come to consider of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, Dignity, and Dominion; which, indeed, were the subjects ultimately aimed at, when the objectors put forth their arguments ostensibly against ceremonial rites. Their doctrine herein is,—“That, by the law of God, there must be for ever, in all congregations, certain *Lay-Elders*, ministers of ecclesiastical jurisdiction:” inasmuch as our Lord hath left (as they assert) *all* Pastors in the Church executors *equally* to the whole power of spiritual jurisdiction; and hath joined the *People* with them as colleagues. And herein they set up a claim of divine right, to wrest spiritual power

from its present possessors, and to share it equally with pastors of all congregations; and in order to effect this more readily, they enlist the *Laity* on their side, by persuading them, that they are only thus contending for their own rights and privileges. If, however, in thus acting, their premises shall appear unsound, then their endeavours to advance Presbyterian power, may seem only a parallel to the conduct of Korah and his company, when railing against Moses and Aaron, they exclaimed, “It is too much that ye take upon you, seeing that *all* the congregation is holy¹.”

II. *On the NATURE of Spiritual Jurisdiction.*

WE must, however, premise that there are *two* distinct powers in the Church, viz. that of *Order*, and that of *Jurisdiction* : the former hath reference to the administration of holy things, as included in our Saviour’s commission, “preach,” “baptize,” “do this in remembrance of me;” the latter respects the management of the affairs of the Church as a society, and is intimated when the Apostle speaks of “ruling the Church of God²,” and of “receiving accusations³.”

The spiritual power of the Church is derived from its Divine Head, and depends not on any natural right or human institution. It was given by Him for the

¹ Num. xvi. 3.

² Acts xx. 28.

³ 1 Tim. v. 19.

good of souls, both in the way of guidance, and of restraint when necessary. And though the words of His Gospel be the only foundation whereon the Church can sustain herself in the use thereof; yet inasmuch as all societies must manifestly, and in the nature of things, have a power of self-regulation for the common good, so the body of the Church must similarly have a power of administering the Saviour's ordinances, and, in this changeful world, of varying, augmenting, or limiting, according to the exigence of the case, in her exercise of that power, which in itself always continues the same. Hence, Spiritual Authority is a power given by Christ, to be used for the good of those subject thereto, according to His own laws, and the wholesome constitutions of His Church.

III. *Of PENITENCE, as a private duty, and an external discipline.*

It will help in no small degree towards understanding the subject, to state, that the ultimate object or *end* of spiritual jurisdiction, is the health of men's souls, by bringing them to *repentance* of sins against God, and *reformation* of breaches of Christian charity against man.

By Repentance, we are to appease those whom we offend by sin; and as all sins deprive us of God's favour, the way of reconciliation with Him, is the

inward secret repentance of the heart, which of itself is sufficient towards God. But if the consequences of our sin reach injuriously to *others*, then something further is required; and the discipline of His Church calls for a public satisfaction in the eyes of men. Hence, we may term the *inward* contrition, the *virtue* of repentance; and the *outward* manifestation, the *discipline* of repentance: the former of which, being always the same in nature and effects, is ever *daily* required of us; but the latter only for certain sins, and in such a fashion and manner as the Church shall, from varying circumstances, consider requisite.

Here seems to end all that really belongs to Book VI.

What follows is an *entire deviation* from the professed object of Hooker in this book, as stated in the title thereof: viz. "An Inquiry into the claims of Lay-Elders to a share in Church Jurisdiction." Instead of which, it consists of a series of dissertations on *Primitive* and *Romish Penance*, in their several points of Confession, Satisfaction, and Absolution. These, though valuable in themselves, and being clearly also, from internal evidence, the composition of Hooker, have, as is just said, no connexion with the professed object of the book¹; and, from peculiar circumstances, seem to have been accidentally substituted for the real book itself. This discrepancy has, however, some-

¹ Unless indeed, as it has been observed, the consideration of the nature of Repentance itself might be *preparatory* to the question, "Who were the proper administrators of the *Discipline* of Repentance." But, even in that case, so judicious a writer as Hooker would not have given his book a title which its subject-matter by no means fulfils, and even scarcely enters upon. Indeed, other considerations show this observation to be unfounded.

what singularly been overlooked, and the book has been published along with the rest, as if it regularly discussed its professed objects, and no such deviation had occurred ¹.

The force of prescriptive custom, and the obvious facility of reference from this Digest to the original work, have led to keeping the old arrangement, and the retention of the remaining portion in this place, which it was once intended to transfer, as an appendix, to the end of the volume.

¹ [The subject has been ably investigated by Keble, in the Preface to his edition of Hooker's Works; and the conviction arising from the internal evidence of the *matter* of the Book not at all corresponding to its *subject*, has been confirmed by a document found in the library of Corpus Christi College: this is no other than a series of Notes,—the genuineness of which seems undoubted,—made by George Cranmer, to whom, as his intimate friend, Hooker had sent his Sixth Book for revision. Now, these Notes, professing to be on the Sixth Book, do in no way, either in mode of reference or matter, correspond with the Book that at present goes by that title.

The most probable solution of these incongruities seems briefly to be this: Hooker, having published the five first Books, had got the other three ready prepared for the press, but died before they could be published. His Widow was connected in relationship with the Puritans, whose *jurisdiction by Lay-Elders*, whereon they prided themselves, was in the genuine Sixth Book attacked with all the force and acuteness of such a powerful writer as Hooker; and she therefore is supposed, at their instance, (which indeed is positively stated as a fact by Walton, in his life of Hooker,) to have surrendered the MSS. to them: and they took effectual care to prevent the contents from ever appearing against them. "Whilst at the same time, in the search which almost immediately afterwards took place, any one eager to publish, and happening to meet with some loose papers accidentally lying next after a rough sketch or *preamble* of the Sixth Book, might, in the hurry and excitement, fall into the mistake of supposing them to be *the* Book itself." The only wonder is, that the incongruity has been so long unremarked upon.

For further particulars on this interesting subject see Keble's edition of Hooker, Oxford, 1836.]

III. (*continued*). Of PENITENCE.

The *virtue* of Repentance is the fruit of divine grace, which offereth itself even to those that have forsaken it; and not only “knocketh without¹,” but likewise assists to open within, whereby a man is made a repaired temple for the Spirit of God to inhabit again: grace is infused *at once*, but the virtues comprehended in it develop themselves in an *orderly succession*.

The first thing done by the Holy Ghost in framing man’s sinful heart to repentance, is enlightening the eye of faith to see and apprehend the future terrors of the Lord; and, consequently, to produce a salutary *fear*, similar to that which caused those of old to cry to the Apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do²?” Even as fear of man oft restraineth from heinous offences, so fear of divine punishment causeth a desire of deliverance from the inward guiltiness of sin, wherein otherwise men would securely continue.

But fear alone does not constitute Repentance; there must be also a *hope* of the possibility of pardon. Utter hopelessness would only produce a hatred and an obduracy like that of those obstinate, godless sinners, who, hating what they dread, labour to extinguish the very belief of a God. Whereas, where there is a sense of the goodness of God, arising from the

¹ Rev. iii. 20.² Acts ii. 37.

hope of pardon, in that He hath provided a way of pardon for rebels against Him, then a *love* towards Him arises, and a consequent desire of reconciliation and re-union with Him, whom we *grieve* that we have offended. And hence, a pensive and corrosive desire springs up, which suffereth us not to rest or cease from confession and supplication, till the light of God's reconciled favour shine in on our darksome soul. And herein we see why David's confession of sin was effectual¹, and Saul's not²: the acknowledgment of the latter proceeded from fear only; that of the former, from fear mingled with love. This feeling was the fountain of Peter's tears; as it was also of the life and eloquence of David's penitential psalms, wherein the very melting words of sorrow do nevertheless bespeak a comforting sense of God's mercy and love.

Hence, the well-spring of Repentance is faith, first breeding fear, and then hope and love; these produce a desire of reconciliation, and a resolution of attempt; "I will go unto my Father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee."

And in this returning to God, there are three things included: viz. aversion of sin; submissive supplication to God; and earnest purpose of amendment. In three words,—as Repentance hateth, bewaileth, purposeth, so there is in it contrition, confession, resolution.

Now, contrition is not a sudden natural passion of

¹ 2 Sam. xii. 13.

² 1 Sam. xv. 24—26.

regret, but a deliberate aversion of the will from sin. This is accompanied, it is true, with external signs of sorrow, wherein grief of heart naturally shows itself; but the outward signs do not constitute Repentance, there must be a deliberate hatred of sin in the heart, and such an aversion of the soul from it, that whereas it once delighted us, so now we shun and abhor nothing so much.

And because God willeth that offences should not only be abhorred within ourselves, but also humbly displayed before Him, and a testimony given of amendment by present works, worthy of repentance, we consider next the duty of Confession and Satisfaction.

IV. *Of the DISCIPLINE of Repentance ; as to its original institution by Christ ; the primitive practice ; and the subsequent perversion thereof, and of CONFESSION, as connected therewith, into an imaginary Sacrament.*

THE Saviour, in His Gospel¹, gave His Apostles the government over God's Church ; for they that have "the keys" are thereby intimated to possess a certain guiding and correcting power, to be exercised for the good of souls. And for this end, to meet the various cases, either of doctrine or discipline, that occur, they have Courts and Consistories, founded

¹ Matt. xvi. 19.

on the sacred authority of that voice which once said, "Tell it to the Church;" and which virtually conferred upon them power of deprivation and exclusion, in the case of those who, by contumacy, might become unto them "as heathens and publicans." To render which decree the more solemn and authoritative, the Lord has promised to ratify them¹; and thus both Apostles² and their successors³ used wholesome discipline for reclaiming of offenders, and as the best expedient for the cure of sin. And this is the original warrant for spiritual jurisdiction in the Church of Christ.

Formerly, open transgressors were put to open penance and *Public Confession*, in the hearing of the whole Church; and were not capable of partaking of the sacred mysteries of Christ, till this was duly done. Offenders in secret, knowing themselves to be as unworthy in the sight of God as open ones were, and being desirous of the advice and help of the Church, did also frequently come unto some minister, and make known their faults, through him, to the rest, submitting afterwards to public confession and such other remedies as might to them seem fit.

But when persecution ceased, and prosperity had caused evils to spring, and schisms, jealousies, and dissensions to arise, this custom of Public Confession

¹ Matt. xviii. 18.

² 1 Cor. v. 3.

³ 1 Tim. i. 20.

began to be prejudicial in many ways, both to the Church and individuals, and thence gradually to be disused; and instead thereof, *Private Confession* succeeded. This continued, as an edifying practice, for some time; till at length the Lateran Council (A. D. 1215) decreed, that *all* men should, once a-year at least, confess themselves to a priest: and from thus making it an act of necessity, they further elevated it into a *sacrament*; teaching, that as Baptism *gave* life, and the Eucharist *nourished* life, so Penitency was a sacrament to *recover* life, and that Confession was a part thereof.

They define, therefore, *Private Penitency* to be “a sacrament of remitting sins after baptism;” and the *Virtue of Repentance* to be “a detestation of wickedness, with hope of pardon, and purpose of amendment:” *i. e. external* Repentance to be a sacrament; and *internal*, a virtue.

Now, passing by their confused illogical statements —(which, for instance, among other things, make Contrition, that can belong only to the internal virtue, a part of the external sacrament)—we admit that Confession of sins unto God is every way necessary, and a duty; as being the best method of testifying a hatred of sin, and of humbling our hearts before Him, so as to make us more capable of His mercy. We also know, that amongst the Jews, no Repentance was

held available without confession, either conceived in mind, or openly uttered: and of this latter they had various kinds,—such as the general confession annually on the day of Expiation; private voluntary confessions; special confessions for particular acts of sin¹; and confessions by malefactors adjudged to die².

But with respect to this Romish doctrine of *auricular confession to the Priest* being absolutely necessary to salvation, there is no Scripture warrant for it. We read, indeed, that to John the Baptist those from Jerusalem and Judæa came and “confessed their sins³,” but besides that his was an *extraordinary* commission, it was *before* this pretended sacrament of Repentance was instituted; neither was it sin after Baptism. And when we read⁴ of some coming to the Apostles, and “confessing their deeds,” though it might be good and proper on that occasion, it hath not the force of a general example, to be so strictly followed as that it should be necessary to salvation to pour out confessions into the ear of a priest: briefly, it shows Confession a virtuous act, but not a *sacrament*. The passage also from St. James⁵ refers merely to *mutual* confession, in order to reconciliation amongst themselves; and that from St. John, “If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,”

¹ Num. v. 6, 7.

² Josh. vii. 19.

³ Matt. iii. 6.

⁴ Acts xix. 18.

⁵ Chap. v. 14, 16.

clearly intimates confession to God, and has no reference to a priest.

But perhaps it may be alleged, that whereas Christ said, “Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted, and whose sins ye retain, they are retained¹ ;” hence, that sins must be confessed to the priest, otherwise he cannot know how to remit them.

Now, the Fathers, in primitive times, and for many centuries after Christ, held no such opinion, and made no such interpretation of Christ’s words : *public* Confession they thought necessary, by way of discipline ; but *private* Confession to a priest, as in the nature of a sacrament, not at all necessary.

From Tertullian we gather, that the *εξομολογησις* was a confession made openly in the hearing of the whole assembly, that “the whole might labour and strive to help that, wherewith a *part of itself* was molested.” St. Cyprian also teaches, that on occasions of lapse, confessions were made unto God’s priests ; not to one singly, but to the whole Consistory of God’s ministers. Salvianus speaks of confession being made “*sub oculis Ecclesiæ*, in sight of the whole Church ;” and “*in conspectu fratrum*, before the brethren.” And St. Ambrose evidently alludes to the same practice, when he speaks of “public supplication” being made by penitents.

¹ John xx. 22.

It is not meant, however, that there was no practice of private confession at all. The first mention of it is found in Origen : from whom it appears, that persons being loth to present their faults rashly to the whole Church, did first unfold their minds to some individual minister, for guidance and counsel, who might either help them himself, or refer them to a higher court, if necessary. And what moved sinners to this, was often a fear to receive the holy sacraments of grace, till the stewards thereof deemed them worthy ; as also, on other occasions, to seek for comfort and satisfaction to their own hearts, from the wisdom and experience of ghostly physicians ; but, above all, it was a fervent desire to receive benefit from the *united prayers* of God's saints. Indeed, the words of Gregory, bishop of Nysse, seem quite apposite to the explication of this ; “Humble thyself, and take unto thee such brethren as are of one mind, and do bear kind affection towards thee, that they may together mourn and labour for thy deliverance ; show me thy bitter and abundant tears, that I may blend mine own with them.” And inasmuch as no one could be a fitter physician for a troubled spirit than a minister of God, he proceeds to say, “Make the priest, as a father, partaker of thy affliction and grief ; be bold to impart to him the things that are most secret ; he will have a care both of thy safety and thy credit.” Whence the

whole scope of these examples goes to show, that even private acknowledgments had nothing analogous to the auricular confession of Papacy ; but were made as well for ghostly guidance and direction, as also more particularly to ensure, by a communication through the medium of one, the sympathy and help of the whole Church, in the efficacy of whose public prayers there was singular trust and confidence.

In process of time, the Greek Church, and subsequently the Latin Church also, altered this arrangement ; and, on account of various difficulties arising out of it, superseded the Public Confession, and established instead certain Penitentiaries, throughout all the Churches, to take the confessions and appoint the penances of secret offenders. This practice continued in the Greek Church upwards of a century, (from A. D. 253 to 391,) and then, in the Episcopate of Nestorius, was for sundry reasons abolished ; the Penitentiaries' office was taken away, and it was left to every man's conscience to determine as to his own fitness for participation in God's holy mysteries.

In brief, we may conclude, from an impartial investigation of the writings of the Fathers, that in primitive times the use of Confession—and especially *Public*—was everywhere allowed of, and commended ; but the peculiar practice of *auricular private* confession to a priest, as it is upheld and insisted upon by the Church

of Rome, we find not¹. And the whole doctrines held by that Church, of Penitence and Confession; of God being unable to forgive sin without the priest; and of the consequent absolute necessity for the priest to give absolution in order to salvation; have no warrant or authority at all, from ancient times, to support them. The pretensions are of modern growth, and antiquity dreamt not of them.

Without more observations upon the papistical opinions herein, we turn to those held by the Reformed Churches. Now, Confession being (as already shown) a chief duty in Repentance, and this not only toward God, but in some cases also confession to man; the principal of learned divines on the Continent have always held, that the latter, when cleared from all errors, is not only lawful, but advisable: and this is more particularly the case with the German and Lutheran Churches, which direct *all* men, at certain times, to confess their offences to God in the hearing of God's ministers; as well for a token of sorrow, as also for advice and direction; and more especially for the benefit of pardon, through the power of those

¹ [Hooker here enters into a long disquisition and sifting of various passages from the Fathers, brought forward to establish this doctrine; and clearly shows, that it is only by illogical reasonings and false constructions, that they can be made to give any apparent countenance thereto; and that their real scope and meaning afford not the slightest warrant for it.]

“keys,” rightly used, which the Saviour hath committed to his ministers.

In the Church of England, *Public Confession* forms a part of her daily Liturgy; and she begins her prayers with a general open acknowledgment before Almighty God, wherein every man may make special application and use thereof to himself, and adapt it to his own individual case and circumstances. And as to *Private Confession*, though the minister’s power, together with the authority of the Church therein, is not denied, yet it is not imposed upon the people as necessary; and because of the various inconveniences that experience shows to attend it, the Church thinks it more expedient to refer men’s hidden crimes unto God and themselves only. At the same time, she has special admonitions to this practice for those that come to the Eucharist; and she holds out the comforts arising from it, for those about to depart from life. In reference to the former, the holy Eucharist being so solemn a rite, and the very highest grace that men on earth can be admitted to, the minister is bound to warn the *unfit* of the peril in receiving, to repel them when known, and to terrify them when unknown. In the case of notorious and flagrant evil-doers, he is to withhold that sacred mystical food until they be reclaimed; but in matters of alleged wrong and injury amongst individuals, as it is difficult to know the exact truth, it is

better to leave the matter between the parties and their God, than rashly to sever any from communion. And in respect of the latter, the absolution of the sick indeed hath no difficulty; and it is rather an office of joy, to be the dispensers of such a precious gift. Even in the hour of death, many may feel the sting of sharp repentance, and manifest the deepest contrition; and, upon special confession, the minister may absolve, by that authority which Christ hath committed to him, knowing that God estimateth not so much the *time* spent, as the *truth* shown, in repentance.

Briefly, when an offence is only between a man and his own conscience, Chrysostom's advice is good; "Tell thy sins to God, who will cure them: let God alone see thee at thy confession." Yet if peace with God do not follow thereupon, and fear and anguish still continue, then it is advisable to have recourse to a spiritual pastor for consolation and remedy.

V. *Of the doctrine of SATISFACTION, as a part of the discipline of Repentance; and of Popish INDULGENCES, as arising out of its abuse.*

WE now come to consider the term *Satisfaction*. In the language of the Fathers indeed, it generally included the *whole work* of penitency; but when it is spoken of as a *part*, it refers to what the Baptist meant by "works meet for repentance."

Satisfaction implies something done to the entire contentment of the injured party, and to be in justice fully equal to the injury committed. Now, sin against an infinite God must necessarily be an infinite wrong, requiring an infinite recompense, or else demanding infinite punishment. Hence man's utter inability thus to satisfy; and God's great love in providing a Mediator to do that for us, which to ourselves was impossible. Wherefore all sin is remitted, *only* in the faith of Christ's passion; and without belief thereof, no man is justified: faith alone maketh Christ's satisfaction ours: and yet *not* the faith unaccompanied by repentance; but that faith, which makes us by conversion His, and willing to do that which, however unavailable in itself, yet being accepted by God in Christ, causes us to become fit vessels for receiving the fruit of His satisfaction.

Repentance implieth the operation of a grace *in us*: Satisfaction, the *effect* it hath, either on God or man; and, if it be complete, nothing further is required. Now, our Lord Jesus Christ, by one most precious sacrifice, did satisfy and reconcile us to God, and purchased His free pardon for all. Albeit we are not thereby freed from the duty of penitence: God hath made it a condition; and Christ is an everlasting Intercessor, through whom every particular penitent's grief for sin is acceptable to God,—who, beholding his

meek submission, regards his deed with infinite mercy, and reviveth his afflicted mind, saying, "It is I, even I, that take away thine iniquity for mine own sake." Repentance thus satisfies God, changing wrath into mercy.

When, however, we speak of God's wrath and mercy, they must not be considered *passions* in Him, as they are in us; but only as terms used in accommodation to our ideas: inasmuch as His punishments for sin seem as the *effects* of anger to us; so His withdrawal thereof is as compassion. And when the sin is once *pardoned*, no further punishment of it remains; once remitted, there is a perfect absolution and discharge: and if chastisements do follow afterwards, as on the people of Israel¹, or Moses², or David³, they are not in revenge for what is pardoned, but only for amendment's sake; and for the noble exercise of faith and patience, to be as examples of warning to others, or as benefits to ourselves. Hence the notion is unfounded, that imagines pardon to mean the remission of *eternal* punishment only, but that a *temporal* one is still to be endured⁴. And as the same fire that

¹ Num. xiv. 22.

² Num. xx. 12.

³ 2 Sam. xii. 14.

⁴ By this mode of reasoning Augustine answered the Pelagian objection, which alleged, "that if death were imposed as the punishment of Adam's sin, it ought to have ceased when Christ had made satisfaction for sin;" showing that the continuance of bodily death was a means of exercising and strengthening faith, in overcoming the fear of death.

consumeth stubble also refineth gold, so we may conclude, with Augustine, that “*before* forgiveness, chastisements are the *punishment* of sinners; and *after* forgiveness, they are the *trials* of righteous men.”

Repentance, therefore, even the sole virtue thereof, in its several branches of contrition, confession, and fruits, without shrift or absolution from the priest, is *effectual* to pacify us to God, through the propitiatory blood of Jesus Christ, and to procure a deliverance from hell, and restoration to glory.

Amongst the works of Satisfaction, the chief are *Prayers*, whereby we lift up our souls to that God, from whom sin had estranged us; *Fastings*, whereby we bring under the body to the obedience of virtue; and *Alms-deeds*, expressive of our good-will towards men.

Indeed, all the parts of Repentance are in themselves as well painful, and therefore a revenge upon ourselves; as also opposed to actual sin, and therefore likely to be a cautionary preservative therefrom: contrition being the contrary to pleasure; confession, to error; and works of satisfaction, to deeds of sin. And though in strictness, satisfaction (as has been already said) be made to God by Christ only, yet both Faith and Repentance are, in the ordinary phrase of the Fathers, termed satisfactory, and may be so acknow-

ledged by us, in that they are acceptable to God, and make sinners *capable* of His mercy in Christ¹.

But though Repentance ordinarily might be private, between God and a man's own conscience; yet in those cases where the Church required some outward sign of satisfaction, if any presented themselves hypocritically, or else by sinister means obtruded on the sacred mysteries, she held them incapable of receiving the grace therefrom which the devout did; and, no doubt, God did retain those bound, whom the Church in such cases refused to loose.

Now, the Church established certain rules of discipline and satisfaction, such as restraining from social acts of worship, and from communion, for certain periods, in some cases even for years; in order that penitents might, by patient submission and regular conformity, form settled habits of religious improvement; whilst, at the same time, they were encouraged by hope of a gradually complete re-admission², which

¹ Particular cases call for particular acts in Repentance: *e. g.* *restitution*, in case of wrong or fraud. This was strictly enjoined in the Mosaic Law (Lev. vi. 2, *et seq.*), even to the heirs of the injured party, if he were dead (Num. v. 8). And though we are not under that dispensation, yet the spirit of the Law extendeth fully in this case to Christians.

² In the case of those who had lapsed, for instance, and repented thereof, it was ordained, "That, earnestly repenting, they should continue three years *hearers*, seven years be *prostrate*, and two years

indeed might be accelerated, on manifestation of deep contrition and zealous reformation¹.

Now, the inventors of the papistical doctrine of sacramental satisfaction have strangely imagined, that when God remits sin, and its eternal punishment, He nevertheless reserveth the torments of hell to be endured *for a time*, longer or shorter in proportion to the crime; but that this temporal punishment may be remitted, by certain duties appointed by the priest, and thus satisfactory to God: if, however, the soul depart from life before these are fulfilled, it must remain in torment till all be paid. And towards the discharge of this, they hold, that the prayers and sacrifices of *others* in life, on their behalf, may avail; whence arose the enormous pensions and bequests to their priests, to pray for the departed, that they might be delivered from torment. Moreover, a still further assumption they have made, that God's saints may, by their pious life and austerities of self-

communicate [unite] with the people in prayer, before they come to receive the Oblation [Eucharist]. In case, however, a person was about to die before his probation finished, the bishop might give leave for him to receive it.

¹ It seems that sometimes imprisoned martyrs were importuned by those under discipline to intercede for an abridgment of the period for them, which was granted in honour of martyrdom; and we find St. Cyprian complaining of this, as likely, if too much permitted, to bring mischief, as well to the Church itself, as also to the penitents themselves, by lessening their sense of sin, and even in some cases of leading into a belief of peace where there was no peace.

infliction, have an *overplus* of merit, which may unite to form a common stock or treasury, as it were, where-out satisfaction may be drawn for the sins of men at the disposal of the Pope: whence sprung all the foolish absurdities and abomination of *Indulgences*; and the conversion of a pretended sacrament into a monopoly of infinite gain indeed to him, but a scorn to God and man.

VI. *On ABSOLUTION of Penitents, and its pre-requisites; ACTUAL only on the part of God, and merely DECLARATORY on the part of the Priest: incorrectness of the Romish tenets herein.*

THERE can be no ease from the sense of sin, but by assurance of pardon; and hence it is to be considered, what force the sentence of man has, to absolve us from sins against God.

Now, when Christ said to the diseased paralytic, “Thy sins be forgiven thee¹,” though some cavilled, yet others, believing Him to be a prophet, admitted His power thus to speak: even as Nathan, without any imputation of blasphemy, said to David, “God hath taken away thy sin.” And as God, in that *special* case, did authorize Nathan, so did Christ more generally authorize His Apostles and ministers, to absolve

¹ Matt. ix. 2.

sinners in His name. The power is the same: the only difference being, that the one had for his warrant prophetic evidence; the others have the combined one, of faith in God's gracious promise to all true penitents, and such external evidence as human observation can furnish, as to the sincerity of each individual.

And as our doctrine of Repentance differeth from that of papacy, in that we consider true contrition of heart to be the chief; and they exalt an outward ceremonial penance of their own devising: so they proceed to assert, that no penitence whatever can be available to absolution, but such as is enjoined by the *Priest's* authority; that no contrition, fasts, or charities, have any force towards this end, except with his privity and under his direction: for they allege, inasmuch as Christ hath said, "Whose sins soever ye retain, they are retained," no man can be reconciled unto God but by their sentence. And thus, forsooth, hath God so tied himself, that without the Priest, He cannot pardon any man!

Now it is true, that by the words above stated, Christ did give His ministers authority to absolve, and promised to ratify in heaven what they should thus do in faithful discharge of their office; but yet, with the limitation that every jurisdiction carries with it, viz. "that all should be done orderly and within

bounds ;” and hence, that though power of remission be given to them, it by no means follows that no sin can be pardoned without them.

We hold, that the virtue of absolution is, “That it declares unto us the assurance of God’s merciful pardon ;” the Papists, “That it really takes away sin.” We admit that Christ alone hath power to forgive sins ; but, nevertheless, that grace operating with our means, He will ratify His promise to His ministers.

To the remission of sins there are two things necessary : *grace*, which alone taketh away iniquity ; and *repentance*, as the conditional duty. When, then, we have God’s promise on the one hand, and the answer of a good conscience as to sincerity on the other, we may well *rest assured* in God’s gracious declaration of forgiveness, as pronounced by His authorized servant. But as there is the power of *declaratory* absolution in the Church towards voluntary penitents, *i. e.* of pronouncing sentence according as the outward tokens warrant, (albeit the actual removal of sin is far beyond priestly power,) so she possesses a more stringent authority of binding or loosing, in reference to sacred mysteries, and can restrain from access to the holy sacraments, or permit it, according to our sinful obstinacy or penitence ; herein binding or remitting, in the full and actual meaning of the expression.

As this doctrine however, though true, has not

escaped from being oppugned, through error¹, on the one hand; neither has it from being perverted by abuse, on the other. And, in this latter point, Papacy hath erred much, holding that men are to confess *every* sin to the priest; and that whatever is concealed from him, God will never pardon: and thus, from overloading confession, as it were, discipline and absolution have been reduced to a mere formality; and, so far from being discouraged, vice has become emboldened thereby. The Fathers, indeed, were very cautious and slow in absolving, before evident proofs of real contrition; whereas the preposterous practice of Papists, in absolving *first*, and appointing works of satisfaction afterwards, hath led them, as well to pervert the real end of absolution itself, as also to run into such absurdities as those of pardons and indulgences, which increase the evils they profess to cure.

In Sin there are three points to be considered: the *act* itself, which is a transgression of God's Law; the *effects* of sin, as a permanent quality, defiling the soul; and the *debt*, or obligation to endure its punishment, whereby sinners are bound, under God's strict justice, till repentance loose them. The act of sin God alone remits; the stain He washes out by the sanctifying grace of the Spirit; and, as to its punishment, since none else hath power to cast into hell, so none besides

¹ By Tertullian and Novatian.

Him hath power to deliver therefrom. And the ministerial sentence of absolution can be only *declaratory* of what God doth: even as was Nathan's to David, when he said, "God hath taken away thy sin." The words are judicially used: and, according to the saying of St. Jerome, "As the priests of the Law could only *discern*, and neither cause nor remove, leprosy; so the ministers of the Gospel, when they either retain sin or remit it, do but in the former case *judge* how long we continue guilty, and in the latter *declare* when we are clear or free." In brief, the discipline of Repentance, both public and private, was ordained as an outward means to bring men to conversion; and when this did appear by manifest outward signs to be effected, then absolution served to *declare*, but could by no means *make*, men innocent.

The reason, indeed, why such opinions on Absolution are so strongly maintained by the Church of Rome, is her having elevated Penance into a sacrament; and as she holds that the outward signs, in all sacraments, are not only *signs*, but also in themselves actual *causes*, of grace, hence she contends that the priest's absolution, being the external sign in this alleged sacrament, does of itself convey actual remission of sin¹.

¹ [Hooker here mentions some misrepresentations of our tenets by Romish writers, on this point, as if we made sacraments merely

We however hold, that in sacraments there are two things to be considered: the outward sign; and the secret concurrence of God's Spirit: just as the Saviour hath taught, that Water and the Spirit combine to work the mystery of the new birth in Baptism: and hence, that no sacramental elements are endowed with any physical efficacy, *per se*, to work grace (which alone proceeds from God); but that, along with the due administration and reception of the sacramental signs, according to His own ordinance, He bestows grace effectual to sanctify, cure, and comfort the souls of men. Though they be not, however, causes of grace, yet they are *not empty, ineffectual* signs,—being means that God employeth: the delivery and administration thereof are in the hands of men, by whom, as by personal instruments, God doth apply the signs, and with them join the Spirit, and through the Spirit work grace: God is the author of the whole; and man a co-operator, appointed to work for, with, and under Him.

Indeed, the Romish doctrine itself is inconsistent with the decrees of the council of Trent, which says, “That contrition, perfected with charity, doth at all times reconcile offenders to God, *before* they come to

modes of instructing the mind by visible images, and nothing more. And he also adverts to other illogical and confused explanations of their own thereon.]

receive actually the sacrament of Penance;" as it is also with the statement of some of their own writers, that on true conversion, "sins are remitted immediately, *before* they receive priestly absolution." What force hath absolution here, when the penitent hath been already pardoned of God? or how can this stand with the pretence of absolution being so necessary, that sin without it cannot (except in rare cases) be possibly remitted?

In order to evade this, it has been alleged, 1st, That there is in penitents an *attrition* or grief for sin, arising from *fear* alone, and that real contrition is produced by absolution; 2nd, That the really contrite *desire* absolution, and this desire is in God's sight as absolution to them. The first of these positions is contradictory in itself: for what need of contrition is there—(and contrition is a pre-requisite to their sacrament)—if absolution produce it? even Judas had this attrition, proceeding from fear alone. And as to the second, viz. the desire of absolution, (to say nothing of many other concurrent feelings to constitute true repentance,) this desire of absolution, even *presupposing that it be commanded*, is but a mark of the obedience of a contrite spirit; and, therefore, as such, one of the component parts of true penitence, in virtue of which alone sin is remitted. The sacrament of absolution hath in this no place, because it hath not been

administered; and where there is no actual cause, no effect can follow. Hence, far sounder is the opinion of some of their own divines, who ascribe the real abolition of sin to God's pardoning it, without any dependance upon the priest's absolution as an efficient cause thereof.

And to conclude : *God alone* gives remission of sins. The virtue of Repentance alone procures, and Absolution does but declare it. The most difficult matter oftentimes, however, is *to satisfy our own minds* in this point, and to make the conscience feel clear of sin. Whilst the sense thereof continues, it is as a sore burden: and this, indeed, is a part of natural religion, and everywhere acknowledged, even by unenlightened Heathens. So that the revelation of a way whereby we may be reconciled to God, and thus shake off the burden, and change the most grisly horrors into comfortable heavenly peace, is worthy of every thankful and most grateful acknowledgment.

But the attainment of this joyful state of mind is often prevented, especially in two ways: first, because some apprehend they may be guilty of the "unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost;" and, secondly, others are fearful lest infirmity should prevent them from that *perfect* repentance which is required. Now, in reference to the first of these, it may be stated, that from the whole scope of the case, "the irremissible sin

against the Holy Ghost," was spoken of those persons in *Apostolic times*, who—having been converted, and received from the imposition of the Apostles' hands the grace and power of the Holy Ghost, enabling them to cure diseases, to speak with tongues, and to prophesy—did afterwards fall away, and blaspheme that blessed Spirit whose gifts they once possessed; so that it was morally "impossible for them to be renewed again unto repentance¹;" and, consequently, they remained sunk in the gulph of unpardonable sin. And the mistake of these self-terrifiers is, that of supposing every act of known and wilful transgression to be of this kind; forgetting, that under the Law there were sacrifices of expiation even for presumptuous sins, as well as for those of error.

As to the second case: there are those who, not doubting God's readiness to pardon on true repentance, do nevertheless imagine their own repentance to be *defective*; and that, after all their earnest wishes and zealous endeavours to be otherwise, their heart remains hard, their deeds imperfect, and their repentance consequently unaccepted,—so that they sink in despair. To such, no better remedy can be offered, than to betake themselves to some spiritual consecrated person, to whom opening their minds, they may receive such ghostly advice and consolation as

¹ Heb. vi. 6.

may remove their timorous scruples, and settle their doubtful minds.

In brief: it is not so much the exact measure of their penitential acts, that is to be considered, as their sincere feeling and purpose of mind. *The heart is it that maketh repentance sincere*; sincerity, that which finds favour with God; and the favour of God is that which supplies, by gracious acceptance, whatever is defective in the hearty and true offices of His servants. “If (as St. Chrysostom says) there be a *will* and a *desire* to return, He receiveth and embraceth, and omitteth nothing which may restore us to former happiness.” The lowest step in repentance sets us above them that perish. So, with Augustine, we will conclude, “Lord, in thy book and volume of life *all* shall be written; as well the *least* of thy saints, as the chiefest: let not, therefore, the imperfect fear; let them only proceed and go forward.”

BOOK VII.

ON EPISCOPACY.

RESPECTING THEIR SIXTH ASSERTION, "THAT THERE OUGHT NOT TO BE IN THE CHURCH BISHOPS ENDUED WITH SUCH AUTHORITY AND HONOUR AS OURS ARE."

I. EPISCOPACY, *though oppugned, providentially upheld, and continued hitherto, as being* DIVINELY-APPOINTED.

UPWARDS of 1500 years the Church of Christ has continued under the sacred government of BISHOPS; and nowhere hath it been planted, during that period, excepting under *Episcopacy*,—which indeed seems plainly an institution of God. Christianity existed in England, under Bishops, even long before the Saxon conquest; and seems to have commenced towards the close of the second century, during the reign of Lucius. On the invasion of the Saxons, with their accompanying Paganism, the Britons—still however retaining the faith of Christ, and its Episcopal government—withdrew into their fastnesses. Hence

we have very ancient historical mention of their Bishops ; so that, at the council of Ariminum, A. D. 359, three British Bishops are recorded as being present. When, therefore, Gregory sent over missionaries to convert the Saxons, about A. D. 600, he found the British Christians still observant of the self-same form of government,—by Bishops over the rest of the clergy. And hence, in establishing Episcopal Christianity amongst the Saxons, he introduced nothing *new* into the country ; but only contributed to replace it in those quarters from whence it had been previously driven. Under this form, Christianity continued till the Norman Conqueror, and hath remained such to the present day.

Surely, then, it must be a strange infatuation creeping over the minds of men, that hath caused a disposition to forsake a mode of Church Government approved by the universal experience of so many centuries, and co-eval with the establishment of Christianity ; and to frame unto themselves a new mode of government, neither appointed of God, nor heard of before, until now.

But, leaving the ordering of these things, and the consequences thereof, in the hands of Divine Providence, we proceed to inquire into the question of EPISCOPACY ; and, first in order, to define the name and office of *Bishop*.

II. *On the meaning of the NAME and OFFICE of a Bishop.*

It may be as well, however, to answer an objection *in limine*, by which the whole argument is attempted to be extinguished at once. For when we plead the *antiquity* of Episcopacy, we are encountered with the reply, "That the Bishops we have now, are not *like* those which were formerly." Though in one sense the remark is true, yet it altereth not the argument however. Were we reasoning, for instance, as to the antiquity and lawfulness of *kingly power*, it would be no fair disparagement of the argument, to assert that kings in ancient times were not *such* in all points as those in the present; the real point at issue being the *nature of Sovereignty itself*. And if Regality in substance did exist, then the accidental differences thereof, arising from change of time and circumstances, cannot invalidate the lawfulness of the office. Just in the same manner, to those who argue against Episcopacy, and who, being pressed by the question of antiquity, attempt to evade it, by alleging a *dissimilarity in circumstances* between Bishops of old and those of present times, we reply, that this makes no *essential* difference in the *nature of the office* itself. Many things in the state of Bishops have changed with the times; many an ancient Bishop may have been in poorer estate

than ordinary pastors now ; but this makes no difference as to those things in regard whereof they are termed Bishops, and wherein they essentially differ from other pastors.

And first for the *Name*. In the original language it signified an *Over-looker* ; and, in ecclesiastical writings, was applied to all Church-governors in a general sense ; but, in course of time, it began to have a limited application to those only who were *Chief* governors over the rest.

Offices and *things* generally are more ancient than the *names* by which they are designated ; and frequently a term of general meaning comes to have, in time, a special definite application. Thus the names of *Disciple* and *Apostle* originally meant *Learner* and *Messenger* ; but were appropriated to designate, in Christian language, the former a Follower of Christ ; and the latter, an Ambassador specially and immediately sent by Himself. And thus the title of Bishop, implying at first *any* ecclesiastical governor, came to mean only the principal or *chief* one. And hence, also, as it is evident that the *restricted* application of the *name* is always subsequent to the actual discharge of the *office* ; this conclusion is an answer to the allegations of those who argue against Episcopacy, merely because there seems no use of the word in its *limited*

application, in Apostolic writings, but only in its general meaning.

And next for the nature of the *office* itself. A Bishop is a minister of God, who has a permanent power, not only of administering the Word and Sacraments, but a further power of *ordaining* Presbyters, and of *jurisdiction* over them, as well as over Laymen,—being as a Pastor over pastors themselves. He has things in common, therefore, with other Presbyters; but those that properly constitute him a Bishop are not common to other pastors with him. And Bishops may have either an indefinite charge, or a restricted one, confined to jurisdiction over the Churches in one particular locality.

III. *On the SUPERIORITY of Bishops ; its authoritative and permanent character.*

IN our government by Bishops, two things are cavilled at: their *superiority*; and the *honour* paid to them. Now, the objectors do admit among themselves a superiority, as arising from eminent gifts and talents; and they also permit it, as an expedient *orderly* arrangement, wherein one man takes a principal, albeit only a temporary, share in any public transaction, others being concurring with him. But they utterly deny “that any one minister should have

permanent superiority above another; or in any sort a superiority of power that is *mandatory, judicial, and coercive*, over other ministers:" which position we, on the contrary, strenuously maintain, and contend that Bishops have had it ever since the institution of Christianity.

And we now proceed to show, by an induction of particulars, the lawfulness both of a *permanent* and *authoritative* superiority on the part of Bishops.

IV. *On the ORIGIN of Episcopacy.*

THE first Bishops in the Church of Christ were His blessed Apostles, as is seen in the appointment of Matthias to the *ἐπισκοπην*; which term implies *government*, just as the term *ἀποστολος* implied having a *mission* to preach. And though the term *ἐπισκοπή* was at first not used in its high and restrictive sense, but applied to inferior offices in general, yet the whole history shows that the spiritual authority, which we have defined as being *properly episcopal*, was exercised by the Apostles of Christ: the *speciality* of the name being (as has been already remarked) subsequent to the actual discharge of the office. The Apostles, therefore, were *Bishops at large*.

Though, however, their charge was *unlimited*, yet, in the execution of it, nothing prevents but that they might restrict themselves individually to some par-

ticular portion, as circumstances seemed to require. And thus, as in preaching the Gospel, Paul betook himself to the Gentiles and Peter to the Jews, so we find John taking charge of the Asiatic Churches¹; and the very case in point, of a Bishop restricting his general charge to one locality, is established by St. James being constituted Bishop of Jerusalem.

The Apostles, moreover,—whether exercising unlimited Episcopal authority, as St. Paul, or limited, as St. James,—did also depute it to others, to exercise in their stead; as they did to Timothy and Titus, in the first instance: though these subsequently were endowed with an apostolical authority of their own². For Ecclesiastical History makes it clear, that the Apostles conferred permanent Episcopal authority on others. *Irenæus* saith, “We are able to number up those who by the Apostles were made Bishops;” and he states that the Apostles made Linus first Bishop of Rome, and Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna: as *Ignatius* also states that they made Evodius Bishop of Antioch.

Hence the Apostles, being first possessed of this authority, all others who have it after them, in orderly manner, are their *lawful successors*,—whether it be in

¹ Eusebius and Tertullian state this.

² This appears from the subscriptions in the 2nd Epist. to Timothy, and in that to Titus; as it is shown also by Eusebius, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 14. § 2.

any particular Apostolic Church, or in any place where an Apostle hath not previously been; succession, in this point, meaning the possession of the same kind of Episcopal power which was first given to them. And thus *Jerome* says, “All Bishops are the Apostles’ successors.” And though they do not (like them) hold their commission immediately from Christ, nor are the first founders of His Church; yet, as in the office of preaching the Gospel, every Presbyter is a successor of the Apostles, so—though not in largeness and extent, yet certainly in that *kind of Episcopal function* whereby to sit as spiritual judges and directors over the affairs of Christian Churches—our Bishops are, in the true sense of the word, successors of the Apostles.

V. *The PERIOD and CAUSES of the Bishoprics being LIMITED to certain localities.*

THE Apostles, under inspired guidance, erected Churches in such cities as received the Gospel; and these Churches all received from them the same faith and sacraments, and also the same form of government; which was, in the first instance, that the Laity should be subject to a sort of College of Presbyters, who are sometimes likewise styled Bishops¹: these

¹ Compare Acts xx. 17 with Acts xx. 28, where the same persons are called, first, Presbyters, and then Bishops; and they are directed, “*Attendite gregi*,—Look all to that one flock of Ephesus, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Bishops:” they being all subject to St. Paul’s control, as their divinely-appointed governor.

being all subject to the Apostles, as specially appointed over them by God.

But as the Apostles could not be present at all Churches, and as disputes arose even amongst the governors of Churches themselves, it became necessary to appoint *one*,—according to the order already begun at Jerusalem,—with an Episcopal authority, derived from the Apostles, over the rest, to settle and determine; and thus the actual *exercise* of the Episcopal authority existed before the *limitation of the name* and title. Hence we find Bishops, in the book of Revelation, called Angels¹.

This order prevailed *universally*, and was so intimately connected with the very idea of Church, that the ancient Christian persuasion was, “*Ecclesia est in Episcopo* ; The outward being of a Church consists in its having a Bishop.”

This order, therefore,—whether by previous express divine appointment, or subsequent approbation,—being established by those under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost, must be acknowledged as an *ordinance of God*. And thus it was held to be by the

¹ Rev. ii. 1, 7, 12, 18, &c.

If it be said that these Angels of the Churches were only the ministers in every Church, it may be inquired then, Why should St. John address his speech to *one* alone? There were many ministers, for instance, in Ephesus: does not the fact of the Apostle's styling one in particular *the Angel* of the Church (Rev. ii. 1) evince his superiority?

primitive Fathers. *St. Augustine* asserts, that “whatever positive order the whole Church observes everywhere, it must have received the same from the Apostles¹.” *St. Jerome* says, that “till factions arose in the Church, and among the people it began to be professed ‘I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas,’ Churches were governed by common advice of Presbyters. But when every one began to reckon those whom himself had baptized to be his own, and not Christ’s, it was decreed *in the whole world*, that one chosen out of the Presbyters should be placed above the rest, to whom all the care of the Church should belong, and so the seeds of schism be removed².”

¹ He adds, “Unless, perhaps, from General Councils;” but these latter pre-suppose Bishops to hold them, and consequently the argument still holds.

² [Hooker answers an objection raised from a wrong construction of Jerome’s words, in reference to the practice of electing Bishops in the Church of Alexandria, as if it were *peculiar* to that place only, and not a general practice. He shows that the words have been wrested from their proper bearing and intent; and that, as is seen above, Jerome’s testimony to Episcopacy is clear and distinct. He likewise explains another passage of Jerome’s, in reference to Bishops with limited jurisdictions; wherein he intimates that their authority, and the Presbyters’ subjection thereto, arose from *custom* more than God’s ordinance. But Jerome, in that passage, was giving an admonition, both to Presbyters and Bishops, that each should behave towards the other as became their stations: the one not contumaciously; the other not proudly: and the words must, therefore, be taken *generally*, as in a matter of grave *caution* to each party, and not

Another argument for Episcopacy is found in the *Succession* of Bishops; as by Epiphanius, the Bishops of Jerusalem are reckoned down from James to the then Bishop in his time, Hilarian. And on this point Tertullian's words are, "Let them show the beginning of their Churches: let them recite their Bishops one by one; each in such sort succeeding the other, that the first Bishop may have had for his author and predecessor some Apostle, or at least some Apostolical person who persevered with the Apostles. *For so, Apostolical Churches are wont to bring forth evidence of their estates*; so doth the Church of Smyrna, having Polycarp, whom John did consecrate." And on this point, Eusebius and Socrates have collected catalogues, making the evidence thereon quite clear and conclusive.

Indeed, when we know, that on many occasions, things of far *less* moment were not commenced without the *Divine direction of the Spirit*,—as, for instance, the baptism of the Eunuch by Philip, the direction of Paul and Barnabas to preach to the Gentiles, the appointment of Timothy to his charge,—it would seem a plain and manifest inference, that the appointment of Bishops, from James of Jerusalem to all the

stringently and literally; as is plain from other passages of Jerome's, similar to the one quoted above.]

various Bishops chosen for the preservation of peace and order in Christ's Church, must have had the same Spirit for its author, and that Episcopacy is a divine institution.

VI. *On the NATURE and MANNER of the Power which Bishops have exercised from the origin of their Order; being that of ORDER and of JURISDICTION.*

THE superiority of a Bishop over a Presbyter consists as well in power of *Order*, as also in power of *Jurisdiction*. As, under the Law, Priests were superior to Levites, and the High-Priest above Priests, each having a more dignified charge, and an authority to do in his superior office certain things not permitted to his inferior; so it is with Bishops, Priests, and Deacons: each of the superior having certain duties wherewith the inferior may not intermeddle.

Now, the power of *ordaining* Presbyters and Deacons is peculiar to Bishops: it never having been heard of, that inferior Presbyters had authority to ordain. Some, indeed, have been led into the error of supposing Bishops and Presbyters equal in power of *order*, because the former offer prayer, preach, and administer the sacraments; all which offices are indeed common to both, but the higher office of *Ordaining* is clearly not so. The Apostles, being Bishops at large, ordained Presbyters everywhere:

and Timothy and Titus, having a special episcopal power for Greece and Ephesus, ordained in these their respective regions.

Confirmation seems generally to have been confined to Bishops; but instances have occurred, when in their absence, this duty has been discharged by Presbyters.

From a direction of the Council of Carthage, that Presbyters should lay their hands together with the Bishop on ordained persons, it has been erroneously supposed that Ordination is not peculiar to Bishops. Now, this indeed is the practice in our own Church at the present day. But this is only in the way of *association*, the Presbyters having no original power therein; just as the Saviour tells the Apostles, "With me ye shall sit and judge the twelve tribes of Israel," although the right and power of judging is in Him alone. Indeed, no Presbyter or Deacon, ordained by Presbyters only, was ever allowed in the ancient Church; though everywhere the converse may be found, where Bishops alone have ordained them.

As to the power of *Jurisdiction*, it may be remarked, that under the Law this was possessed by the High-Priests over the Priests, and by the latter over the Levites: *e. g.* Eleazar, the son of Aaron, we read, was to be "chief over the chief of the Levites, and

have the oversight of them ¹; as we also find that the Gershonites were to be “at the appointment of Aaron and his sons, in all their burdens and in all their service².” Indeed, this is not denied by our opponents; but only an attempt is made to evade its force, by saying, that the High-Priest being a *figure* of Christ in His supremacy, when the Saviour came the figurative supremacy ceased. Now, it is true that the High-Priest was a type of Christ in many things,—such as, for instance, in his entering once each year into the holy place, to atone for the people; but these points were matters of *Order*, and not of jurisdiction; and to imagine, that an office for directing and regulating a whole society, was so far typical, that it had no other end but simply to *prefigure*, is absurd. Indeed, St. Cyprian and St. Jerome use the same mode of arguing for Episcopal jurisdiction, by the *analogy* of the Law: the latter says, “That which Aaron and his sons and the Levites were in the Temple, Bishops Presbyters and Deacons, in the Church, may lawfully challenge to themselves;” and the former also proceeds to assert, “That it is not left to our own choice whether Bishops shall rule or not; but the will of our Lord and Saviour is, that every act of the Church be governed by her Bishops.” Ignatius observes of Bishops, that they are *ἰερατενεῖν καὶ ἀρχεῖν*. And, to

¹ Num. iii. 32.

² Num. iv. 27.

adduce no more from the many evidences on this point, the power of Timothy and Titus over Presbyters¹, in their respective Episcopates, was clearly one of rule and jurisdiction².

Passages have indeed been alleged, both from St. Jerome and St. Chrysostom, implying that Bishops were only superior to Presbyters in the power of conferring Ordination: *e. g.* the former says, "What may a Bishop do more than a Presbyter, except it be only to ordain?"—and the latter, "Bishops seem not to excel Presbyters in anything but only in the power of Ordination." But here they are writing only on the power of *Order*, which by divine consecration is given to Bishops above Presbyters; and their words are not intended to apply to the authoritative part of their *Jurisdiction*, which was necessary for the government of the Church. That this is so, may be at once seen by reference to other parts of their writings: *e. g.* Jerome says, "I marvel that the Bishop under whom Vigilantius is said to be Presbyter, doth not yield to his fury, and break that unprofitable vessel with his

¹ 1 Tim. v. 19.

² Calvin admits, "that in old time the Ministers which had charge to teach, chose of their company *one* in every city, to whom they appropriated the title of Bishop, lest *equality* should breed dissension." He then goes on to assimilate their office and *authority* in spiritual, to that of the Roman Consuls in civil, matters. Though, singularly enough, after these admissions, he denies that Bishops had authority to bear rule over other Ministers.

Apostolic and iron rod ;" again, advising Nepotian, he says, " Be thou *subject* unto thy Bishop, and receive him as the father of thy soul." And Chrysostom, when through the factious conduct of a party he had been banished, and was afterwards summoned to appear, objected on the ground of two of the messengers being his own Presbyters ; and that it was contrary to all precedent, that *they* should be sent to summon him, who were a part of that clergy whereof he himself was *ruler and judge*.

VII. *On the MODE wherein Bishops, associating Presbyters with them, administered the affairs of their respective Churches.*

THE custom was, whenever Bishops and their Presbyters met in council, on affairs of their Churches, for the Bishop to have a raised seat of dignity, and to be surrounded by his Presbyters, who assisted him with their advice in important matters. Ignatius calls Presbyters *συμβουλοι και συνεδρευται του επισκοπου*, "counsellors and *assistants* of the Bishop." Not that the Bishops had not power of themselves to act,—for this they clearly had ; but rather, as a matter of discretion and convenience, they voluntarily submitted things to the college of Presbyters, which they might have done of their own power and authority. Sometimes they also consulted other Bishops, who attended at their

councils in matters of moment. But that the Bishop's power of jurisdiction was inherent, *ex officio*, may be seen in the answer sent to Rogatian, a Bishop who had consulted Cyprian and other Bishops, about the contumelious conduct of one of his own Deacons: "That though in his own cause he did *of humility* rather show his grievance [unto others] than himself take revenge, which by the vigour of his Apostolical office and the *authority of his chair* he might have done;" yet if the party should again offend, he was to "use on him that *power* which the honour of thy place giveth thee, either to depose him or *exclude* him from access unto holy things."

The Bishop had also under him a Presbyter named Arch-deacon, to superintend the Deacons; and another Presbyter to rule the Presbyters; which latter office corresponds to what is now called *Dean*. So that, notwithstanding time may have made certain changes, yet our Cathedral officers are clearly remnants of Apostolical antiquity; and for their support and continuance, as such, it is our duty earnestly to strive.

VIII. *On the LOCAL EXTENT, or DIOCESE, over which the authority of a Bishop reached; on ARCHBISHOP-RICKS and PRIMACIES or PATRIARCHATES.*

HAVING established the position that Bishops had jurisdiction over Presbyters, we may now inquire,

although only as a secondary consideration, how far in point of locality this extended ; or, in other words, the extent of their *Dioceses*.

In early times, care was had to provide a Bishop for every Christian city, if possible : the college of Presbyters in which, together with those in its circumjacent province or territory—(for smaller congregations, with single Pastors to each, by degrees spread in the country-villages)—were all subject to him. The cities themselves, also, as believers increased in number, had separate Churches provided in them, wherein single Ministers officiated to separate congregations. But all these Churches, whether in the city or adjacent towns and villages, had a respect for the principal City-Church, as a sort of *mother*, out of which they grew : to whose Bishop they and their Pastors were all subject ; and to which they resorted for the administration of such things as their own Presbyters were not entitled to perform. This mother-church was usually termed *Cathedral* ; which, with the College of Presbyters, formed the Bishop's *See* ; as the local compass of his authority did his *Diocese*. Within his own See and Diocese, it was his peculiar office to ordain Presbyters and Deacons, and to dispose of matters of importance.

Here, then, we may remark, that as St. Paul had a general and unlimited Episcopal authority, and Timothy and Titus an extensive but more limited

one; so other Bishops had a smaller Episcopal charge and authority, but yet extending over many congregations.

There were also persons appointed by the Bishops to be a kind of substitutes or vicegerents for them, over those Churches of their See that were distant; and those had the name *Chorepiscopi*; but their power was limited to the oversight of the Churches, and the appointment of sub-deacons, and smaller officers: the power of *ordaining* being reserved to the Bishop himself.

The same causes that required the jurisdiction of Bishops over their respective Presbyters, called, in the course of time, for the establishment of a higher order amongst themselves. The public affairs of the Church enlarging with the increase of her estate and members,—general consultations and judicial ordinances being required, and sometimes disputes arising between Bishops themselves,—rendered it eventually necessary to appoint certain of their own body, to superintend and preside over the deliberations of the rest¹; and thus *Arch-Bishops* were established: in constituting of whom, it seemed fitting that the civil

¹ Even the Puritan objectors, in their Synods, admit the *principle*, by electing one of their Pastors to rule and preside over the rest. And although this pre-eminence is but *temporary*, yet it is renewed in some one individual, each time they assemble. Whereas we prefer having one continual president.

dignity of the *place* should be considered; consequently, that the Bishop of the mother city or *Metropolis* should hold the chiefest rank amongst the other Bishops: and hence the title of Metropolitan, which attaches to an Arch-Bishop.

And as the Archbishops were many, during that period when the whole Christian world was under one civil government, there being many mother-cities, and consequently Metropolitans, in the various regions of that extensive sway; so a still higher order arose over the Archbishops themselves, called *Primates*, or *Patriarchs*, of whom there were *four*: viz. the Primates of Alexandria, of Rome, of Antioch, and subsequently of Constantinople: these Patriarchs, or Primates, having the same prerogative power in reference to Archbishops, as these latter had in respect to Bishops¹.

All Bishops were indeed *equal*, as regarded their power within their respective dioceses; but when sundry of them had occasion to assemble on general public matters of the Church, then the Archbishops

¹ Though the title of *Primate* be now given to an Archbishop, yet in strictness it was appropriated to the Patriarchs, as above-mentioned. And this title was recognised at the Council of Nice, A. D. 324; at which the three above first-mentioned Primates were present. About sixty years after this, Constantinople was erected into a Primacy, and the Primate thereof adjudged to rank next after the Primate of Rome.

took precedence and authority¹: and when, from various causes, difficulties arose amongst them, the Council of Nice appointed unto each grand division of the Christian world one Primate, or Patriarch; from whose decision there was no appeal, except to a general council of Bishops.

IX. *On ANCIENT objections to Episcopacy, as held by AERIUS and his followers.*

THE first strenuous opposer of Episcopal superiority that we read of in early days, seems to have been one *Aerius*, a disappointed man, who, seeking to be made Bishop, and angry that Eustathius was preferred before him for the office, set himself to impugn the dignity he had coveted. His position was, that Scripture makes no difference, in point of order, between Bishops and Presbyters; that the latter are competent to all the duties of the former; that, for instance, Presbyters made Timothy a Bishop²; and

¹ The prerogatives wherein Archbishops were superior to Bishops were, the power of *convening* the Bishops in their own provinces on public occasions; granting the Bishops leave of absence, when necessary, from their dioceses; apprising them of things commanded by supreme authority; hearing accusations (if any) against them, and deciding in cases of appeals from their inferior clergy; and all Provincial Councils required the presence of an Archbishop to give their acts validity.

² 1 Tim. iv. 14.

that the Apostle calls Presbyters by the name of Bishops¹: and hence, that the custom of the Church, in instituting such orders, is unwarranted. Now, to pass by the wrong conduct of Aerius,—in causing schism, and not submitting to the order of the Church,—he was wrong also in his conclusions: for it doth not follow, because the Word of God does not *mention* or *appoint* any difference between a Presbyter and a Bishop, that it *prohibits* any such distinction ever to be made. Yet this is the whole ground of his argument.

X. *The three general grounds of MODERN objections to Episcopacy.*

AND this ground is also taken by the enemies of Episcopacy at the present day; who build thereupon all their arguments, precisely in the same way, against any inequality or difference between Presbyters and Bishops. They allege, 1st, that it is a mere *human invention*, and that the order and authority of both are the same; 2nd, that it is a *corrupt aggravation* of an ancient incorrect practice; 3rd, that it is *unscriptural*,—being not only unwarranted, but even condemned, by Scripture.

¹ Phil. i. 1.

XI. *On the allegation that Episcopacy is a mere*
HUMAN INVENTION.

THESE allegations they endeavour to uphold by the following positions : 1st, That wherever Scripture mentions the word *Bishop*, it signifies a person having an oversight only in respect of some particular congregation, and not over other pastors ; and hence, that the names Bishop, Presbyter, and Pastoral-Elder, used frequently in Scripture, are all *synonymous* : 2nd, That there is no difference in the manner of their election and ordination ; hence, also, they are equal : 3rd, As the *Apostles* were all equal, so Pastors, being their successors in ministry and power, are likewise equal : 4th, That the power of the “keys,” and of ordaining ministers, is not in any one Pastor of any one Church, but belongeth to the Church itself ; and hence, all Pastors therein are equal, not only in Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, but also in Jurisdiction and Authority : 5th, That the Council of Nice attributed the difference [now held] to ancient *custom*, and not to God’s ordinance : lastly, That all ministerial functions ought to be set down in the word of God ; and if they be not so, (as Bishops are not,) then they are inventions of men, and can do no good, but only harm, to the Church of Christ. To all which it may be replied,

generally, that their alleged proofs from Scripture on this point are unavailable ; and that, even were Bishops (as they assert) of no Apostolical institution, yet their authority is not thereby disannulled, nor proved unsuitable or unprofitable to the Church. For,—

1st. It is untrue that the term *ἐπισκοπή* implies only an oversight of a particular congregation: the office of Matthias, for instance, is termed *Episcopal*¹, and was common to him with all the other Apostles, whose authority clearly was over more congregations than one ; and, consequently, included an oversight over Pastors themselves. And though Pastors of certain individual Churches were sometimes termed Bishops, sometimes Presbyters, implying a charge only over the Laity therein ; yet this does not prevent the *special* application of the term in cases of higher government and charge, such as those had whom St. John calls *Angels*².

2nd. There being no difference in the rules for Election and Ordination, is of no weight towards proving no difference in office : the same would apply as to Priests and Deacons ; and yet we know that Scripture maketh them not equal. And a reason why Timothy and Titus did not receive directions about Bishops specially, may be, that they had Episcopal authority to ordain,—not Bishops, (that power being

¹ Acts i. 20.

² Rev. ii. 1.

yet with the Apostles,)—but only Priests and Deacons.

3rd. The argument from the equality among the Apostles is less conclusive still. True, *they themselves* were all equal; but they had authority over all other Pastors who were not Apostles: Pastors, therefore, were subject to Pastors, in Apostolic days; and where is the commandment that this custom should cease, and that all should thenceforth be equal?

4th. As to the fourth position: the power of the “keys,” *i. e.* of Censure, and also of Ordination, is in the Church; but it is administered by some specially-appointed superior: *e. g.* to Timothy it is said, “Receive *thou* no accusation save with two or three witnesses¹,” to Titus, “I left *thee* in Crete, that *thou* shouldest redress the things that remain, and shouldest *ordain* Presbyters in every city, as I appointed thee².” If there had been an equality in all Pastors, that all might perform the same things, why this special appointment? and why were not the Epistles addressed to the *other Pastors* in conjunction with Timothy and Titus, as being their alleged equals? Similarly, also, the Epistles in the Book of the Revelation should be addressed to the whole of the Pastors, and not to the *Angels* of each Church. Scripture, therefore, does make an inequality of Pastors.

¹ 1 Tim. v. 19.

² Tit. i. 5.

5th. The Nicene Councils only referred to certain customary honours in the Church, as connected with Primates, and had no allusion to superiority of Bishops, as a divinely-appointed ordinance, over Presbyters.

6th. Even supposing the generally-received opinion were incorrect, as to the Apostles leaving Bishops invested by them with power over other Pastors; yet, in that case, if the Churches agreed among themselves to appoint such to hold an Apostolic power, as chief over the rest, for the good of the whole, this ought not therefore to be abrogated¹.

All things in the Church ought, it is true, to be of God; but there are two modes in which this may be: first, by His own special institution; and, secondly, by man's appointment, but with His approbation. And of His approval it may be considered sufficient evidence, that either His Word warrants it, or that our own reason perceives the intrinsic goodness and fitness thereof, together with its non-repugnancy to His Word and ordinances. Nay, indeed, we disparage the work of God's hands, if we reject every thing simply because "the wit of man" hath devised it.

¹ Our Saviour's question, "The baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men?" (Matt. xxi. 25)? implieth that spiritual functions may be given, not only immediately by God himself, but also by lawful authority amongst men: and supports the conclusion, that without one of these two modes of commission, no exercise of spiritual functions is warranted.

All that is *good*, in the way of civil or religious institution, may be said to be of Him, and approved by Him, whether specifically set down in Scripture or not. Hence, the Apostle terms even the Law of Nature¹, as the Evangelist does the Law of Scripture², *δικαιωμα του Θεου*, God's own righteous ordinance. What, indeed, is expressly directed in Scripture is of more paramount authority; but this forbids not that other things may be estimated and revered according to their true use and worth. Hence, if our Episcopacy were not derived from the Apostles, but only an institution for the general good of the Church, yet no exception could on that account justly lie against it.

XII. *Episcopacy alleged to be UNNECESSARY.*

OTHER allegations, however, are made: as 1st, That as in the primitive Church all Pastors were equal, and her affairs flourished, Bishops (in our meaning of them) are superfluous; if really necessary, they would have been earlier instituted: 2nd, That as Christ prescribed all, even the minutest things, under the Law, so He would not have left so weighty an affair undetermined in the Gospel: 3rd, That as faults had better be investigated on the spot, the office of Bishops and Archbishops, with jurisdiction at a distance, is unsuitable.

¹ Rom. i. 32.

² Luke i. 6.

XIII. *Refutation of the foregoing assertions, as to Bishops being UNNECESSARY.*

Now, it hath already been shown ¹, that the Apostles did rule over the Church of Christ as Bishops *at large*; and, consequently, at first there was no need for Bishops with local limited jurisdiction established in every city. But so far from the Church subsequently flourishing *because* without these, it was the *evil* that immediately arose wherever *they were not*, that led to their universal appointment, after the manner of that Episcopate already so beneficially established at Jerusalem: and thus the very origin of the office proves its use and *necessity*. The argument from want of *express prescription*, as the Jews had for every thing, under the Law, is here inapplicable: were it otherwise, indeed, we should clearly then have to refrain even from building churches, inasmuch as we have no directions at all for the structure of them; whereas the Jews had for every particle of their Temple. And for the objection of *distant places* for trial or appeal, it is evidently of no weight; such customs being adopted generally from experience of their benefit, and being sanctioned by the Apostle him-

¹ [An objection is here answered by Hooker, founded upon a *perversion of Cyprian's words*, that Bishops were only Pastors of single congregations: and the perversion and irrelevancy thereof are shown.]

self, who “appealed from the court of Judæa unto Cæsar” at Rome.

XIV. *On the alleged DIFFERENCE between the Power of Bishops, as exercised in ANCIENT times and in MODERN.*

BUT the superiority of Bishops to Presbyters having been conceded,—at least as being of ancient standing,—another objection is raised, “that they had not the *same kind or extent* of power as ours have:” such as ordaining without the people’s leave; excommunicating or releasing of their own will; bearing civil office in a realm, &c. Now, supposing it were so, and that by degrees they had crept into this *sole* exercise of power; yet even thus they perform not, after all, any act which in itself they were originally debarred from doing, only with the consent and co-operation of others: and if such a custom had, by a sort of general tacit consent, obtained in the Church for many ages, it is not therefore to be uprooted. The Church, as a body politic, is competent to make new laws, or abrogate old ones; and if she either let ancient canons go into desuetude, or abrogate them at once, then such laws are not afterwards to be brought forward as forming grounds whereon to build objections.

At the first institution of Deacons, it is true that the Apostles committed unto the *people* the power of *choosing* out fit persons for the office ; but it was the imposition of Apostolic hands that *constituted* them such. And, in making of Presbyters, both the custom and canons of the Church require that hands should be “laid suddenly on no man ;” and that due examination and probation of them should take place before presentation to the Bishop ; which, in fact, is the custom in the Church of England even now ; but, as in the case of the Deacons, it is the imposition of hands alone that constitutes them Presbyters, the selection and probation being only preparatives thereto. And hence, if the Bishops ordained fit persons, even should the people exercise no previous choice,—(such custom having by tacit consent fallen into disuse,)—neither is there transgression of any law in this, nor is the ordination in any sort invalid. Indeed, experience shows how inconvenient, and even unsuitable, some customs, originally good, may in time become, especially in matters wherein a multitude exercise power. And on this very principle the objectors themselves act, in the mode of appointing their own Deacons by an *Ecclesiastical Senate*, and not, as in Apostolic times, by the people at large : and the reason they allege is briefly this, “That, as in civil governments the whole sway

is originally in the people's hands, who voluntarily appoint magistrates,—but that afterwards the magistrates, and not the multitude, have the ordering of public affairs,—so exactly it was with the Church; the regimen of which is not now in the hands of the whole multitude, but wholly in theirs who are appointed guides thereof: and hence, what for certain causes was done by the people, before the Church was fully settled, *cannot be made a perpetual form* of ordering the Church.” Unless, then, that which is truth, when uttered in defence of the practice in Scotland and Geneva, ceases to be truth when applied to the Church of England, here is in their own reasoning a complete answer to all their allegations against us on this head.

There are two things in every ecclesiastical function; “Power to exercise the duty;” and some “Charge of people whereon to exercise it.” The former can only be conferred by the visible Catholic Church; and they whom she hath authorized, as her instruments herein, are *not* the Laity (of whom it hath, therefore, never been heard that they were allowed to ordain), but certain ecclesiastical persons, superior both to Deacons and Presbyters, who have power to confer *order* in the name of the whole Church. Such were the Apostles, such were Timo-

thy and Titus; such Bishops, who, though different from them in some points, are the *same* in *pre-eminence of place*, otherwise they might not ordain¹.

The power of Order having been thus conferred, and requiring next some Charge, then cometh in the *People's consent*, and not before. Power of Order may be received without their consent, but cannot be exercised upon them against their wills. In this respect,

¹ Episcopal Ordination, however, in extreme and extraordinary cases, may perhaps be dispensed with: as when God specially raiseth up some instruments for His own purposes; only, in that case, they must be furnished with some evident and satisfactory sign, that He hath authorized them. Or, again, should a Church ever be in such a position as not, by any possibility, to obtain a Bishop to ordain, she must yield to such inevitable necessity; and the lineal descent of power by Apostolical succession is not, in such case, to be urged absolutely, and without any possible exception.

[As connected with what is just said in regard to Episcopal Ordination, a reference to the words of Hooker may be made here, which was omitted in its proper place at Book iii. page 96. "For mine own part,—although I see that certain reformed Churches,—the Scottish, and especially the French,—have not that which best agreeth with Scripture, I mean the *government that is by Bishops*, inasmuch as both are fallen under a different kind of regimen,—to remedy which is for the one altogether *too late*, and for the other *too soon*, in their present affliction and trouble,—this their defect and imperfection I had rather lament, in such case, than re-agitate; considering that men may often, without any fault of their own, be driven to want [be deprived of] that kind of polity which is *best*, and to content themselves with that which either the irremediable *error* of former times, or *necessity* of the present, hath cast upon them." Here, though clearly contending for Episcopacy, he at the same time speaks with a tender reserve and Christian forbearance of the irregularities into which pressing circumstances had driven others.]

no Pastor in the Church of England exercises his charge in any parish, but the people *virtually* consent thereto. Not, indeed, that they do so by particular vote ; but inasmuch as in former days it seemed reasonable, and for the encouragement of further piety in the eyes of the Christian world, that those who built and endowed Churches on their own soil, and at their own charge, should have the appointment of the Minister thereof, the *public right* was thus orderly devised to an *agent*, whose choice therefore is virtually theirs.

Hence it is untrue that Ordination ought *only* to proceed on the people's suffrages ; that ancient Bishops could not otherwise ordain ; or that our Bishops have usurped a power not originally belonging to them.

Nor yet is the allegation well-founded, that they also act tyrannically in *excommunicating* or *releasing* by their own power, without concurrence of the *many*. Indeed, by the word *many* here, the objectors mean not the people at large, but a *council of Lay-Elders* ; and the reply to it might well rest on their own words, as just quoted in reference to Ordination. But the *tyranny* of any act depends, not upon the number of agents, as one or more, but in its being *contrary to law* ; and if a Bishop excommunicate only those whom the law authorizes him, the complaint is groundless. Besides, were he to call in others, viz. Presbyters,

into council hereon, still he would not remove the complaints of the objectors, because they would have *Lay-Elders*, such as no ancient Bishop ever was judicially associated with. How much better to strive for real good, than to contend on such trifles !

XV. *On the CIVIL power and authority exercised*
by our Bishops.*

ANOTHER objection is started against the power of *secular punishment* being entrusted to our Bishops, and against their being permitted to hold *civil offices*. With regard to the former—(premising that it is not any capital punishment, but only one extending to imprisonment),—what they do is only done according to the laws of the land; and herein, were it necessary, a precedent might be adduced from the practice of the Priests under the Law¹. And in reference to *civil offices* being held; though some may be unsuited to the clerical character, yet *all* are not, but may be held, and that often with manifest general advantage. For instance, a Christian society may be placed in such circumstances, as that there is a lack of discerning and skilful men among the Laity; and then, what hinders that, in the spirit of the Apostle's advice², they should commit the arbitration of their disputes to

¹ Jer. xxix. 26.

² 1 Cor. vi. 1—7.

the wisest among them, even if the same should happen to be their Pastors? Indeed, Augustine concluded therefrom, that it was actually *incumbent* upon him, albeit it was pain and travail to him, nevertheless to “endure the perplexities of other men’s causes,” to which toils “the Apostle, being directed by the Spirit, had tied him.” Again, in Ecclesiastical Societies it is expedient on similar grounds, that certain of their own body should undertake civil offices for the right government of the whole: hence Chancellors, and other like academical officers¹.

And, indeed, in a general point of view, wherever God hath bestowed eminent peculiar gifts and parts, it would seem somewhat derogatory of the Giver, were the Commonwealth wherein they live to be entirely deprived of their ability in a civil capacity. Do we not read of David employing the High-Priest as his chief counsellor of state? nay, even of the Jews sometimes selecting Priests to be their leaders in war? Moreover, from certain dignities attached to ecclesiastical offices, there may arise an increase of respect for religion itself, salutary at all times, as far as it goes: and thus, in our own nation, the Clergy are held for

¹ Supposing any of the Blood-Royal in a nation be ordained to the Ministry; and the Crown did descend to him, ought he thereby to be precluded from his lawful civil dignity? or, rather, might it not be a blessing to the Church, that he should be, as God’s anointed in two senses, a nursing-father to her?

the chief of the three estates that make up the entire body of the commonwealth, under one Supreme Head.

Hence, there may be a certain conjunction of civil with ecclesiastical power, exercised beneficially to a nation, provided it be not of such a kind or extent as is contrary to law or reason. And that there is no real incompatibility in such things, we have the striking instance in Scripture, of Eli being both Priest and Judge, and of Ezra being Priest and Governor.

Nor will the argument apply here, which is sometimes alleged, from the conduct of the Saviour, when He said “My kingdom is not of this world,” and refused to be made a king, or to interfere in civil matters; He merely implied, that such was no part of the *Messiah’s* office.

Neither again can any argument be drawn from the words or conduct of the Apostles; who taught that “good soldiers of Christ should not entangle themselves with the business of life¹,” and who themselves never took upon them civil office or power. For in the first instance, the Apostle is only giving *general* advice, to be regulated by circumstances, that disciples should not be too much occupied in worldly affairs, so as to cause neglect of spiritual; otherwise

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 4.

for instance, his words might be drawn even into a prohibition of marriage itself¹, which brings many cares. And in the next place, their own circumstances, and those of the times wherein they lived, formed a sufficient reason for their not sustaining any civil offices themselves.

And whereas it is alleged also, that sundry Canons and Councils forbid the Clergy to bear secular offices; neither is this sufficient to overthrow our position, that, under certain circumstances, ecclesiastical and civil offices may be profitably conjoined. In the law of God it is showed that they may be so. And if occasionally laws have been made to restrain it, they have been rather to restrain an *excess* in the practice, than to form ground of perpetual prohibition. Indeed, change of times requires change of regulations; and the Church has power as well to relax old laws, as to make new ones. For instance, ancient laws forbade ecclesiastical persons to be executors of wills, or guardians of children; are these laws of perpetual obligation?

However it would seem idle to argue these points further with those who protest both against what *hath been*, and *what is*; and who utterly condemn, as well the ancient as the present superiority of ecclesiastical persons.

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 7, 8.

XVI. *Refutation of the objection that the laws of Christ, and the judgment of the best men in all ages, FORBID Episcopal superiority.*

It is however urged, that the words of our Saviour forbid the authority of one minister over another, when he saith, “Kings of nations bear rule over them; but it shall not be so with you¹.” Now,—to omit arguments derived from this peculiar mention of *regal* government, and of *Gentile* kings,—the best interpretation of these words will be arrived at, by considering the circumstances under which they were spoken. The Jews had a mistaken notion of their promised Messiah’s kingdom,—that it was to be that of a mighty temporal prince, who should subdue the world, and make Jerusalem the seat of an universal empire. Under this impression, the mother of Zebedee’s children sued to the Saviour for their secular aggrandisement, when, as she expected, He should set up His kingdom; and Christ replied, that though kings of nations might have ample preferments for

¹ From these words the *Anabaptists* deduced, that Christians ought to have *no civil government*, but only be ordered by Christ their head: alleging that Christ spoke to His Apostles not in their Apostolical character, but as *Christians*, in opposition to Heathens generally: a conclusion which our present Puritan objectors will not allow, because it suits not their purpose to go so far; but they, nevertheless, urge it to the extent they *themselves* require it.

their respective followers, yet His disciples must not look for such things from Him, whose kingdom was not of this world. Hence, the passage referring to His own case and circumstances, has only a general bearing to His disciples, and inculcates humility of temper, and spirituality of views, but it has no specific application to distinctions amongst Christians themselves¹. For, indeed, it is a well known fact, manifest from Scripture, that the Apostles did exercise authority and power over the rest of the disciples. Neither, as has been already stated, is evidence wanting in the writings of the ancient Fathers, on this head; nothing is more constantly insisted upon, than that Episcopal authority is sanctioned of God, and that, according to His divine law, the whole Christian fraternity is under an obligation of obedience to their Bishop; it was a thing universally admitted, and agreed upon by the Christian world of old: and it is only pride of heart and spirit that moves men now to despise, what was once so reverently esteemed, and

¹ Two objections are here stated from the words of Cyprian, and the Council of Carthage; but in the former case, Cyprian is only protesting against an *undue assumption* of power over him, and not against degrees of ecclesiastical dignity: and in the latter, the Council of Carthage only lays it down, that amongst Archbishops, though the chief Metropolitan had a certain *prerogative* over the rest, yet that this power was not of the same kind, and to the same extent, as that of Bishops over their own Clergy, which reached even to suspension, excommunication, or deposition.

falsely to allege arguments from Scripture, in order to procure their own self-exaltation, and to set up themselves as teachers not brooking a superior.

XVII. *On the HONOUR and RESPECT paid to Bishops, being a great cause of enmity against them.*

ONE chief motive of opposition to Episcopacy is, the *honour and respect* paid to it, and through it to the Clergy; whereat their envy and jealousy are stirred up, precisely as in the case of Korah and his company against Aaron and the priests of God¹. Now, honour is the respect due from man to man, according to the several kinds of worth which each may possess, and by which they are presumed to be beneficial to their fellow-men; the degrees thereof being regulated according to the measure of worth in each. And the inward feeling of this requires to be evidenced in outward actions. Hence the Scripture direction, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the person of the aged²;" thus we are directed to "honour the king;" and even by St. Peter to "honour all men;" that is to give to each the proper degree of respect, "honour to whom honour," and "custom to whom custom" is due. And though the external signs, such as titles, gestures, &c., in themselves, are of little value, and easily given, yet they

¹ Numbers xvi. 3.

² Leviticus xix. 32.

are practically of great influence amongst mankind in general; so that, strip any office of its external ornaments, and the estimation thereof will be visibly diminished. And as the custom in this kingdom—(even as it was in Israel of old, and is now in all Christian kingdoms)—is to give to the chief prelate in God's name, the degree of honour next to that of the Sovereign, the reasons thereof may now be investigated.

XVIII. *The various PUBLIC BENEFITS arising from Episcopacy, form the chief ground of its being HONoured.*

THE ground then, whereon to claim honour for the prelates of God's Clergy, is the public good they are the authors of. Now, as God's favour is the great prop of states, and the practice of true religion therein the great means of securing it; so true religion is intimately connected with prelacy, and by consequence its public benefit is clear. This latter position, however, is now often disputed. But if it was accounted amongst God's blessings to His people, that they were led "like sheep by the hands of Moses and Aaron¹;" the former being as *a civil* governor, and the latter as a *spiritual* one; it must be likewise beneficial now, to have what was exemplified by the rule of Moses and Aaron, viz. Monarchy and Prelacy;

¹ Psalm lxxvii. 20.

Sovereigns being as Moses was; and Bishops, in reference to their Clergy, being what High Priests were then to the inferior priesthood. And as Christianity also was singularly benefited by the regimen of the Apostles, so doth it continue to reap benefit from prelates their successors.

As, however, the steersman's quiet office in a vessel seems not, to the unobserving eye, one of so much beneficial importance, as perchance that of the more bustling ordinary mariner,—albeit, the safety of the vessel is involved therein; so the government of prelates is often by the unthinking depreciated. But to those who estimate aright the great value of orderly, punctual, and efficient ministration of all the sacred ordinances, in God's house and vineyard, the authority whereby such a singular benefit is secured, and negligence therein prevented, will never be otherwise than highly revered. And even if—(what must happen through human infirmity)—they be not in all points personally such as they ought, yet the authority itself of their office effects great good; and whilst those that rule well are by the Apostle's verdict¹ “worthy of double honour;” others, at least, for their office' sake, are not to be lightly esteemed.

There are also other public benefits derived to a

¹ 1 Tim. v. 17.

State incidentally from prelacy; as the increased esteem wherein it is held by foreign powers, when the virtuous conduct of Bishops, the lights of the Church, shines out conspicuously: or when posterity hath recourse to their history, for orderly direction in ecclesiastical matters: or when,—in consideration of the peculiar feelings arising from different grades of society,—a Sovereign requireth the aid and direction of a spiritual counsellor, he may at once have the benefit thereof, in a person whose elevated position removes many obstacles that else might have stood in the way; even as Joshua had Eleazar, the High Priest, for his counsellor;—David, Abiathar;—Constantine, Hosius, the Bishop of Corduba; and other Christian kings their respective Prelates, whose private advice and admonitions were often of singular benefit. We must be content to deal with human nature as it is, and personal feelings must be respected; and hence by a similarity of reasoning, Prelacy is beneficial also in respect of the Aristocracy of a nation, by the discountenance of vice, and the encouragement of virtue, given by Bishops moving respectively as *peers* amongst the various grades of nobility. Indeed, the conjunction of Prelacy with the Aristocracy, in forming one integral portion of the State, whereof the King as supreme is also one, and the Laity another, was a most

wise arrangement of our forefathers, which, who-soever should attempt to sever, would thereby greatly impair the general good.

And, as the detriment arising from the loss of civil government is great to the people at large; so would there be equal injury from loss of ecclesiastical government, whereof Prelates are the chief support, and whose power is beneficial generally to the settlement of disputes and difficulties between clergy and their flocks, and also particularly to the Clergy themselves, in thus affording them natural guardians as it were, and protectors against oppression and wrong.

Hence, Prelacy being attended with such various and manifest good fruits,—tempering excesses in all estates, binding together the parts of the body politic, and contributing to the religious and moral benefit of society—instead of meriting the disregard and contempt that the vile would heap upon it, is in every point of view, entitled to honour and respect at the hands of all.

XIX. *On the KIND of Honour due unto Bishops.*

HAVING shown the grounds whereon honour may be claimed for Prelacy, it remains next to show the *sort* of honour which is due thereto. Good government, either in a Church or Commonwealth, depends very much upon the public external respect paid to

its governors, in their character of governors: for though individually, governors may be esteemed in proportion to their private virtues; yet it is in their official character, that honours are due to them, as a public token of the estimation wherein the beneficial effects and social advantages of their order are held; and this honourable respect no individual, on the mere strength of his own private opinion, is warranted in withholding.

These things have been indeed wisely instituted and arranged beforehand by those who, knowing the variability of men's opinions, have laid down rules and regulations to secure, by public decision, an uniformity in so important a matter; allotting different degrees of honour and dignity to different situations. So that the people at large, as in civil offices, so here in religious ones, might have some criterion, whereby to guide them in their estimation of things. For if there were no such distinctions of public esteem in religious offices, as there are always in civil ones, what would follow, but an impression that religion is not accounted beneficial to a State, and a consequent disregard thereof? In vain, therefore, doth a state pretend to honour God, unless it honoureth God's ministers.

For order's sake, there must be amongst the body of the Clergy *degrees* of honours; and these may be classed under the heads of Titles, Place, Ornament,

Attendance, Privilege, Endowment; and in these things Prelates have ever ranked much higher than the inferior Clergy.

XX. *On the Honours of Bishops in respect of* TITLE, PLACE, ORNAMENT, *of* DRESS, *and* ATTENDANCE.

IN reference to the first of these distinctions, *i. e.* *Titles*, we find that under the Mosaic law, those appointed to sacrifice were comprehended under the general name of Priests; there being, however, the higher distinctions amongst them of Arch-priests, who stood at the head of the twenty-four companies of Priests; and of the High Priest, who equally stood above these latter. Even so the ministers of Christ's Gospel have the general name of Presbyters; and above them Bishops and Archbishops. And the honour of pre-eminence of *Place*, respectively allotted to each rank, is a necessary arrangement for decent order and propriety.

Ornaments of *Dress* have also a propriety; even as the wise Preacher says of Aaron, that God "made him blessed through his comely ornament, and clothed him with the garment of honour¹." For though the robes of a Judge add not to his virtue; and as the chief ornament of a King is his justice, so of a Bishop, is his purity of life; yet, notwithstanding, the pecu-

¹ Ecclus. xlv. 7.

liar attire of each is an evident token of estimation, and of the honour wherein, for their office' sake, they are held. Thus, likewise, *Attendance* belongeth similarly to Bishops, even as to High Priests under the law. For though the Saviour came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister," yet He had His stated Apostles and Disciples, who followed Him and waited upon Him. And when the Apostles were commissioned by Him afterwards, though despised by the world generally, they nevertheless had amongst the saints, those who ministered to them. And Ignatius shows, that in his days, attendants were regularly provided for Bishops¹; as, indeed, the affairs for Church regimen would necessarily require, even though they formed no portion of honourable retinue.

XXI. *On Honours by ENDOWMENTS, with Lands and Livings.*

BUT these things might all most probably have been easily admitted by the objectors, were it not that the Clergy had the substantial honour of *wealthy endowment*: this, in truth, is the real origin of their alleged grievances, and what stirs them most to anger.

"How soon—oh! how soon might the Church be
" *perfect*, even without any spot or wrinkle, if public

¹ Hence the name *Acolyte*—(*ακολουθεω*, to follow)—shows that there was a regular set train of attendants usual about Bishops.

“ authority would at length say *amen* unto the holy
“ and devout requests of those godly brethren, who as
“ yet with outstretched necks, groan in the pangs of
“ their zeal, to see the *houses of the Bishops rifled*,
“ and their so long desired *livings gloriously divided*
“ amongst the righteous. But there is an impedi-
“ ment, a let, which somewhat hindereth these good
“ men’s prayers from taking effect; they, in whose
“ hands the sovereignty of power and dominion over
“ this Church doth rest, are persuaded that there is a
“ God!” And hence, that the robbery, attempted
under the name of *reformation*, is vile sacrilege!

To argue with those whose hearts are set on such plunder, would be useless; but for the information of others, we may do well to show, 1st, That none hath property in Church goods, but God himself: 2nd, That the Clergy are God’s receivers therein,—Prelates having the honour of principal ones: 3rd, That each have the power of *using* such, according to their respective receipts: 4th, That even in case of any *abuse* herein, the receipt thereof cannot nevertheless be lawfully alienated from them to persons of another profession.

XXII. *All Ecclesiastical Property, of every kind, peculiarly and* INALIENABLY BELONGETH UNTO GOD.

ALL possessions of the Church belong to God, in such sort, that no man, as such, can claim property in them¹. Every thing, indeed, is God's, in right of creatorship: but sacred property is His by another tenure; inasmuch as those who receive blessings from Him, have returned them again to Him in the way of *special gift* or oblation; so that God terms the places wherein such gifts were stored up, as being peculiarly "His treasures²."

Such oblations seem to be prompted indeed even by natural piety, whereby men are led to "honour the Lord with their substance," so that their "barns may be filled with plenty³." For although sincerity of heart and spirit, be the chief things He requires, yet outward tokens are not to be omitted, both as evidences of our gratitude, and as manifest proofs to others that we honour Him. And in doing so, the gifts we bring should be the *best* and choicest that we have, as being most suitable to His dignity, and also

¹ For more on this subject, see Part v. sect. 80, on Oblations, Endowments, and Tithes; and on the inalienable character thereof, see page 280.

² Mal. iii. 10.

³ Prov. iii. 9.

conformable to the intimations of Scripture, which everywhere shows that God expects this at our hands. The sacrifices under the law, for instance, were to be “without blemish;” the “first fruits,” and the “first born,” all belonged unto God. And though sacrifices are not required now under the Christian dispensation, yet the *principle* of “honouring God with our substance,” is still binding upon us; and an offering of gratitude is a homage still required at our hands. The prophecy which said, “The kings of Tarshish and of the Isles shall bring presents” to the Messiah; the visit of the magi to Him with “gold, frankincense, and myrrh;” the pouring of precious oil upon His head¹, which the Saviour said should ever be “told as a memorial of her who did it;” all indicate the acceptability of such things before God, from the hands of Christians.

Now the best gifts are evidently those that have the greatest *permanency*; hence, absolute *donations* of such things as are irrevocably and permanently given up to Him, rank first; and hence, lands and endowments were formerly devoted to Him, by entire alienation on the part of the owners. In primitive times, indeed, *money* arising from the sale of lands was given; because in the exigency of those times, it was most advisable. But subsequently, when

¹ Matt. xxvi. 13.

Christianity was spread and established, then *houses* and *lands* in perpetuity were hallowed and set apart for His service. And herein, Constantine's devotion stands admirably conspicuous.

If any one should be disposed to carp at this, let him first consult Solomon's ¹, and Malachi's words ², and consider also the conduct of the holy patriarch Jacob, who vowed, if God would be with him, to prosper and keep him, that he would set up "a house of God," and "give a tenth of all he had unto Him³." May not a Christian follow the example of holy Jacob? Is there any law of nature or of Scripture to forbid it? Or rather do not both concur, to consider it, as such, acceptable unto God? And in things so consecrated and given up, no man or community of men, in their civil capacity, can claim any propriety or share whatever.

XXIII. *Ecclesiastical Property entrusted to the Clergy as GOD'S STEWARDS; Bishops the chief-receivers thereof; with a power of freely using a portion for their own benefit.*

OF this sacred property of God, Ecclesiastical persons are the Stewards; as they are the ministers in His spiritual gifts, so they are receivers in His temporal revenues. Amongst the Jews, tithes were first

¹ Prov. iii. 10.

² Mal. iii. 10.

³ Gen. xxviii. 22.

offered to the Lord, and then bestowed upon the Levites ; whilst the tithe of the Levites' income was given to the High Priest¹ ; and of spoils taken in war a portion was laid up as a grateful offering to God in the Tabernacle. And similarly, in the earliest times of the Church, we find that contributions for general use were put into the hands of the Presbyters, and by them delivered to their Bishop, to be disposed of at his discretion as their head. On this ground the Apostolical canons were framed, arranging that Bishops should have chief control in sacred property.

Difficulties have been started, as to the *use* whereto these sacred treasures should be applied ; and some have condemned their expenditure in costly ornaments for God's house. But although we know that when He is worshipped in spirit and in truth, such worship is acceptable, even though in caves and dens of the earth, when men are so situated as to be unable to provide better : yet it is evident from the sacred history, that when circumstances permit, God expects external honour to His House ; and of this the splendid Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the magnificent Temple in Canaan bear ample testimony.

The chief difficulty, however, seems to be about the *apportionment* of it for the maintenance of his Clergy. But the regulation of the Mosaic law may

¹ Num. xviii. 24.

afford us guidance herein; and is indeed the best criterion we can have; inasmuch as it was arranged by God himself. Looking then at all the regulations about offerings and tithes, we shall find on a fair computation of quantity and quality, that the tribe of Levi received about *four-twelfth* parts of the produce of all the lands of Canaan: and hence, that each Levite's share was ample, being, on comparison, four times as good as that of any individual in any other tribe; whilst the High Priest's share, being a tenth of all the Levites' portion, placed him in a state of very superior affluence.

Besides this, forty-eight cities were allotted them, for their special residences, dispersed through all the tribes, in order that they might have convenient and ready access in instructing the people. And thus did God himself apportion and honourably provide for his clergy, exempting them from manual toil, and setting them above want and penury.

Now in God's making a provision after this sort, there is great wisdom displayed, inasmuch as it prevents the heart-burnings and grudging which men might otherwise be disposed to feel; for what they thus give, they are taught to consider as in fact a *portion to that Lord*, to whose providence they are indebted for every thing: it is represented in Scripture as given to Him *as a right*, and bestowed by

Him on His ministry¹. And that Christian ministers ought not to be inferior to Jewish ones, the Apostle's argument clearly proves; "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, eat of the things of the temple; and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? *Even so* hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel²."

If then the grateful hearts of God's people prompt them to honour Christ with their riches, nothing prevents that the portion of His ministers therefrom, under the Gospel, should be as ample as that of priests under the Law; nay, even the Apostle says, "so hath the Lord ordained it." And what they thus enjoy, is not to be deemed as the mere hire of human service; it is a *sacred maintenance from Christ*, who counts them worthy the hire. And although men should be found, wicked enough sacrilegiously to defraud them of aught thereof, yet their faithful labour in the Lord shall not be forgotten, but, in one way or other, the hire of which He accounts them worthy, shall be punctually fulfilled to them.

In primitive times, when Christians disposed of their property for the good of the *whole community*, and entrusted it to the Apostles³, it would be absurd to suppose that the Clergy would be excluded from a

¹ Num. xviii. 24.² 1 Cor. ix. 13.³ Acts iv. 35.

proper share, wherewith to provide their own decent maintenance. The Apostles, and the rest of the Clergy at Jerusalem, seem to have lived as a sort of Collegiate Society, and were supported, as well as the poorer brethren, from a common purse, contributed by the faithful; and in this sense we must understand the passage¹ respecting their “having all things in common.” For some centuries, there seems to have been no other maintenance for their Clergy, save what arose from the devout charity of believers, in bestowing goods or lands; the proceeds whereof formed a sacred Christian treasury, from whence to defray the charges in the service of God, to provide a support for the Bishops and their Clergy, and to minister to the poor. And for the management thereof, one of the Presbyters was appointed by the Bishop as a sort of treasurer², who administered the portions according to his directions.

When circumstances however caused some Presbyters to live apart from their college,—as when the districts began to have *parochial* limits, and a minister to separate parishes,—then their allowances were sent them separately³; whilst a certain number still con-

¹ Acts ii. 44.

² The office and name remain, though the original object no longer exists.

³ These portions were called *sportulæ*, and the receivers thereof *fratres sportulantes*.

tinued to reside and share a common table with the Bishop, as a College Society.

This apportionment, however, being according to the discretion of each Bishop, certain disputes began in the course of time to arise, respecting what was his own proper share, and whether he might not be induced to assign himself too much. This led eventually to a regular specific arrangement; whereby it was fixed that, the revenues being divided into four equal portions, each Bishop was to have one-fourth share; the Clergy another; whilst another was set apart for furnishing and upholding Churches; and the remaining fourth was appropriated to the maintenance of houses of relief for the poor.

Hence it appears, what proportion of maintenance was, in those early times, thought fitting for Bishops; even a fourth portion of the whole Church-revenues. And hence we may infer, that their state was not altogether *so mean* as some have asserted. Indeed, the contrary is shown, from the very circumstance of ambitious men being extremely discontented when they failed in their endeavours after a bishoprick, and when being “disappointed (as Lactantius says), of wealth and honours” thereby, they sometimes separated with their followers from the Church.

As to the ancient canons, which the objectors allege, restraining the expenditure of Bishops; these had

only reference to the times when they lived in common, as has been said, with their Clergy; and some fitting regulations were necessary for the expenditure of a whole body. But they have no force or application *now*, when Bishops have an entirely separate and peculiar maintenance, in the expenditure whereof their own discretion must be their guide. Neither is the argument of any force, which goes to set up the Saviour's poverty and mean condition, as a pattern or a measure for a Bishop's mode of living; for if the rule be applicable at all, it is equally so to all Christians at large. And as the Saviour's poverty is a sufficient example, to teach every disciple of His a lesson of contentment, even under the meanest circumstances, and to repress all covetous dispositions in all: so to urge it as a rule for every one strictly and literally to follow, is evidently absurd¹.

XXIV. *The SACRILEGIOUS INJUSTICE of confiscating Ecclesiastical property to secular purposes.*

INDEED it would seem clear, that it is not so much from a sincere wish to accomplish a true reform, whereby effectually to benefit the Church of Christ,

¹ Supposing a person, summoned before one of the Synods of the Puritans, were to object to their authority, on the ground that the Saviour "came not to judge;" would they therefore abolish their Elderships, and permit no more tribunals?

that the cry is raised against Episcopal revenues; as it is from a rapacious desire, on the part of wickedly covetous and ungodly men, sacrilegiously to seize and convert to their own use and benefit, the treasures that have been *solemnly dedicated to God*. They therefore put forward loud accusations against the Clergy, and raise an outcry in the ears of the unwary and simple multitude, in order to create a prejudice against God's ministers; and to obtain a colourable pretext for their persecution, and spoliation of their temporal possessions, which excite the cupidity of their calumniators. At the same time, we well know, that God sometimes uses wicked men as the instruments for inflicting deserved chastisements upon His people; and it behoveth, on such occasions, to look to our ways, and see whether our transgressions have merited it, in order to our repentance and reformation. And Bishops will do well herein to lend a patient ear, in Christian humility, to any respectful and seasonable admonition to themselves, though it be from those in inferior place.

Let none then aim at obtaining the sacred office of Episcopacy, by undue means; and let both the receiver and the bestower of the office of Prelate look well to it, that they avoid this grievous and scandalous sin (impious in *both* parties,) of making merchandise of

holy things, and profaning the Church of Christ by such ungodly bargains.

For Bishops, moreover, certain *qualifications* are necessary, to render them efficient in their office. It is one that requires not only soundness of judgment and integrity of purpose; but also much skill, learning, and acquaintance with the civil and canonical laws; and when men of such qualifications are appointed, it is well for the land. Yet even when so appointed, they should not rely on themselves *alone*, but rather strengthen each other's hands by mutual consent and co-operation: a singular benefit, indeed, would thence ensue, both to themselves and the Church at large.

And in the general discharge of their Episcopal duties, it is highly incumbent on them to exercise great *caution*, whom they *ordain*, and whom they *institute* to any holy function or preferment. Nothing more contributes to bring the Church into contempt, than a lack of competent skill and ability on the part of her ministry. And though in the matter of institution, the rights of patrons may form some obstacle to Bishops—(albeit their own easiness or want of resolution herein often increaseth the difficulty);—yet there can be no excuse for any negligence in the admission of unfit and incompetent persons to ordi-

nation, and for thereby throwing upon the Church not only a useless but an injurious burden.

Moreover, in the bestowal of their own *patronage*, Bishops should beware of *favouritism*,—a grievous blot; and should set a commendable example to others, by giving dignities or preferments to the *worthiest* in their dioceses; and thus hold out an encouragement for learning and industry, to those over whom they preside.

It might be well, also, if *Visitations* were rendered more efficient, and made to answer their original intent, in the investigation and correction of abuses; rather than that they should be held in their present manner of mere formality: and if in their *Courts* likewise, speedy straightforward justice were done, free from all corrupt seeking of gain and profit.

As a Bishop, solicitous for the welfare of souls, might be a general blessing, by a zealous and steady course, tempered with paternal kindness and courtesy towards his clergy on the one hand, and firmness of discipline on the other; so it is to be feared, that this desirable object hath been sometimes frustrated, by the fault of those whose patronage hath exalted *unworthy* persons to such a high and important trust. And for this evil of former times we are now perhaps grievously suffering.

The estimation wherein Bishops are held, ariseth

from the excellency of those virtues that fit them for their office. If their souls be possessed of God, and influenced by His Spirit,—if they exhibit a meek devotion, a serious sense of religion, deep meditation on holy things;—if these and similar divine virtues appear in them, then will their very position itself draw a higher and more reverend estimation of their Christian conduct generally; and, moreover, they may be the happy means of winning over to the paths of *life*, those of higher grades amongst whom they move, and whose state-occupations not unfrequently are a sore hindrance to a truly religious path. Hence, indeed, it behoveth them, at all times, to walk circumspectly; with dignity and gravity, both of speech and action, as great ambassadors of God; in soundness of wisdom and knowledge, as angels of the Church; and in fervour of piety, and warm diffusive charity; and, lastly, withal in *daily prayer* for aid and strength, knowing that many wait on every side for their halting: so that their petition to God should ever be, “Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies.”

Let not, however, malicious censurers think, that though Bishops may not always reach so high a standard, this will form any just excuse for their own hard and cruel speeches against them, proceeding from an evil temper and bitter spirit. Indeed, we are

all too apt to look upon Prelates generally, with an overweening sort of expectation; to desire too much from them; and not to make that reasonable allowance for them, as frail and fallible men, which we ought to do for all that are encompassed about with infirmity. And, hence, proportionate discontent and vexation arise, whenever our expectations herein are disappointed.

But after all, whatever may be the case as respects the conduct of Prelates, it does by no means warrant the spoliating or defrauding of God's heritage. If even Ananias and Sapphira could not reserve, without impiety, a part of that which themselves had just given; how stands the case with those, who would sacrilegiously lay hands on that which never was theirs; and which for ages has been consecrated by the piety of others to the honour and use of God?

Moreover, also, a feeling of *sound policy* might restrain men herein, even if no sense of religious reverence did. For nothing contributes more to the good of the Commonwealth, as well as the Church, than that those in high stations, both ecclesiastical and civil, should be furnished with a sufficiency, wherewith to maintain an appearance and a hospitality corresponding thereto. And to bring the Episcopal order into the contempt consequent upon poverty or scanty means, would be a public injury in

many ways; as well by lowering generally the tone of respect for religion, as by indisposing fit and competent men to undertake such important offices; and also by checking the endeavours after sound learning, when the hope and means of reward are diminished or destroyed.

The law of Moses made careful provision, under a solemn penalty, that what was once given to God should remain *sacredly His for ever*. “Ye shall not make common the holy things of the children of Israel, saith the Lord, lest ye die¹;” the lands of the Levites might not be alienated or sold, “for it was their possession for ever².” And sacrilegious despoilers have a heavy curse denounced against them³.

In early times, a better feeling prevailed than that which we see exemplified now, when the Clergy seem marked out as a legitimate prey for plundering. In those days of old, when the poverty of the Clergy was as great as their enemies now wish it to be, the noble and the wealthy considered Solomon’s advice, “Honour God with thy substance, and the chiefest of thy revenue; so shall thy barns be filled with corn, and thy vessels run over with new wine;” and with holy David, they thought it not meet, “that they should at the hands of God enjoy all sorts of abundance, whilst God’s Clergy suffer want:” they con-

¹ Num. xviii. 32.

² Lev. xxv. 34.

³ Mal. iii. 9.

sidered the Saviour's promise, that even "a cup of water," given from Christian motives, should "in no wise lose its reward;" and hence the revenues of the Church were augmented by pious bounty; kings and queens became her nursing-fathers and nursing-mothers; and the Saviour fulfilled thus His promise, that "they which should leave father or mother, or lands, or goods, for His sake, should receive even in this world a hundred-fold ¹."

But this blessing of prosperity bred envy and jealousy against the Church; and as in preceding ages, men thought they could scarcely give enough, so present times seem dissatisfied, and as long as anything remains, think it too much. Even computations have been made and laid before our Sovereign the Queen, how much public burden might be lightened by spoliation of Episcopal revenues. But in vain was this done to one, who, acting always like her gracious self, felt the awful responsibility she was under, in regard of that Church whereof she hath vowed to be the protector; in whose pious regards we have the strongest assurance, and whose sense of religion, we feel persuaded will shine to all posterity ².

¹ Matt. xix. 29.

² [This statement cannot but strike as being peculiarly applicable to *other* times, as well as those of Hooker, under Elizabeth. May the concluding expressions of trust and confidence for the protection of the Church, be as fully realized, as they are strikingly appropriate *now*!]

But even regarded with a view to political economy only, apart from religious considerations, the confiscations of Bishops' property might not conduce so much to public benefit, in the alleged reduction of burdens, as it does in its present condition, where what is received returneth back again, partly to State revenues, and partly to the benefit of the public at large. We might learn a good lesson on this head, from considering what particular diminution of public burdens arose from the dissolution of monasteries and religious houses in days of old¹.

Nay, even if the plea be put forth, that on the ground of their *abuse* of such revenues, they ought to be deprived of them ; in this case, let the rule be fairly applied, which, if applicable to one party, is equally so to another ; let the ample possessions of *all* who abuse them, whoever they may be, be proposed for confiscation, simply on the ground of that abuse, and need we advert to the outcry that would instantly be raised? What then becomes of the justice of that plea when used against Bishops, whose title to their

¹ [Hooker here makes a distinction between the property of *Monastic* Institutions and that of the *Church*. He considers Monasteries as a sort of "*civil corporations*, such as the city of London has divers ;" and that "as their institution was *human*, and their end for the most part superstitious," they consequently "had not that holy and divine interest which belongeth unto Bishops." And, hence, that the sequestration of Monastic property under the Reformation is not liable to the charge of sacrilege.]

possessions is as good as that of any sort of men whatever; and in this point is even above all secular titles, that it is founded on a solemn consecration and dedication to God.

The liberality, however, towards the Church, as just adverted to, in former times, may be somewhat sadly contrasted with her reduced circumstances now. What she has been deprived of by way of impropriations or other means—(though length of possession, and faith in the law which at the time secured it, render it inexpedient to moot its restoration)—has so diminished her resources, that generally speaking there remains nothing, save what a spirit of rapacious envy alone could find fault with; considering that all other avenues for a clergyman's obtaining income and support for his family are closed to him, so that many a tradesman or artisan would hesitate to exchange positions with a minister of God. And it seems indeed hard, that the Clergy alone should thus be exposed to obloquy, because they enjoy that which is their own by special right; and that a spirit should be abroad, to reduce them to depend on the voluntary and casual support of those that may be found perchance not grudging to give! Were indeed the glory of God, and the furtherance of religion thereby to be promoted, the case would be different; and ready might they themselves be found perhaps, to make the sacri-

fice. But when Levi is to be robbed, merely that Simeon and Reuben may divide and devour the spoil,—and God's Clergy are to be plundered, only that a rapacious Laity may share thereof,—then we would solemnly appeal against the injustice ; and, adopting for our Church the language and prayer of Moses for Levi, would say, “ Bless, O Lord, his substance, accept Thou the work of his hands ; smite through the loins of them that rise up against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise no more¹ !”

¹ Deut. xxxiii. 11.

This Seventh Book seems decisively, from internal evidence, to be the genuine production of Hooker, and a real, though mutilated rough and imperfect draught of what the completed Book itself was ; which, together with the Sixth and Eighth were (as stated at page 304), irrecoverably lost after Hooker's death.

BOOK VIII.

ON THE KING'S SUPREMACY.

I. *State of the Question between the Church of England and her Opponents, respecting the King's Supremacy.*

WE now come to treat of the last matter in dispute, viz. the "Power of Supreme Jurisdiction," which, by way of distinction, we shall term the *Power of Ecclesiastical Dominion*¹.

It may be in the outset remarked, that under the Jewish polity, the exercise of Ecclesiastical Supremacy was not incompatible with that of Civil Supremacy; as we find in the case of Simon², who indeed was both Chief Governor or Secular Prince, to be "over

¹ The arrangement of the Text here followed, is that adopted in Keble's Hooker, Oxford edition, 1836; the basis of which is an important MS. in Trinity College, Dublin, containing a considerable accession of new matter, together with a totally different arrangement of several portions of the Book. So that, though we "are still far from having the Book, as Hooker himself would have published it,—yet the *disjecta membra* are somewhat more decently arranged than before."—*Extract from Archdeacon Cotton in Keble's Preface.*

² 1 Maccab. xiv. 42, et seqq.

the country and weapons, and fortresses,” and likewise High Priest, “to provide for holy things.”

And if it be objected, that Simon did thus exercise an ecclesiastical power solely in virtue of his office of *High Priest*, which as a merely civil governor he could not do, the actions of David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Josias, and others of their ancient kings, all go to prove the contrary; for we find the sacred history frequently adverting to the occasions, whereon they made laws and regulations in matters purely religious, respecting the affairs of the temple and the service of God.

And the very circumstance that the piety or impiety of their kings did always change the public condition and appearance of their religion, does of itself show that they were possessed of power in spiritual affairs; and, moreover, that it was such a power indeed as the Priests had *not*, is shown from the fact of such changes being always termed *the deeds of the king*¹.

From this precedent in the Jewish polity, Ecclesiastical power is, by the laws of our realm, annexed to the Crown.

Now against this our custom, strong objections have been raised; it being asserted to be contrary to the law of God, for any lay-person to exercise Eccle-

¹ If at any time it were otherwise, it was only when the offices of Prince and High Priest were combined in one and the same person.

siastical power at all : and the objectors ground their argument herein, on such an alleged specific and essential difference existing between the Church and Commonwealth, as that no one who belongeth to the one society, can possibly be permitted to exercise any functions in the other, without a violation of God's law : that they are bodies depending indeed each upon God, but yet totally separate and independent of each other ; so that Ecclesiastical power therefore belongeth solely to those, who by proper spiritual functions are Church-governors.

Whereas *we* hold, that the care of religion being common to all bodies politic, such societies as embrace the *true* religion, have the name of *Church* given to them, by way of distinction from the rest¹. Thus in former days, when only the Commonwealth of Israel had the true religion, it was styled the Church of God ; and, subsequently, every nation that embraced the truths of the Gospel, was termed the Church of Christ : as a *politic society*, it maintains religion ; and as a *Church*, that religion revealed by God through Jesus Christ.

We hold, therefore, that a Church is any society of men, united by some regular form of government, and distinguished from other societies by the exercise of

¹ By *true* is meant true in *essentials*, and not in every minute accidental particular.

the Christian religion : whereas the objectors contend for a still *further* distinction, and even in a Commonwealth of professing Christians, sever and set apart the Church from the Commonwealth itself.

Hence we maintain, that as there is not any man of the Church of England who is not also of the Commonwealth ; nor any member of the Commonwealth who is not also of the Church of England ; so, though different qualities and functions do severally cause the names of Commonwealth and of Church to be given to a multitude, yet it is in such sort, as that one and the selfsame multitude may constitute *both* ; and no person appertaining to the one can be denied to be of the other. And unless the objectors can prove the contrary—(which they cannot do),—and show that the one comprehendeth always persons not belonging to the other ; then their argument fails, which would maintain, that civil and ecclesiastical government are completely *distinct* ; and that, consequently, no one holding office in the one, can discharge functions in the other.

Briefly, they hold a *personal* separation, which excludes an individual entirely from dealing in both : we hold a *natural* distinction, which doth not hinder, but that the same person may bear authority in both.

Mistakes on this head have arisen from two causes : First, from the circumstance of professors of the true

religion living in heathen states, *e. g.* the Jews in Babylon, and Christians subsequently in infidel lands, —when the very facts of the case led necessarily to a complete *severance* of their religious regulations from the civil government of the country wherein they dwelt; and hence sprang the error that it should be *always* so, under all circumstances: Secondly, from the usual custom of distinguishing between secular and spiritual affairs, and the persons respectively occupied in each; whence the error hath grown, that there is an absolute and essential difference between Church and Commonwealth, and a necessary *personal* separation between the individuals employed in each. Indeed, even the Heathens had their religious offices distinct from civil ones; but yet it did not cause two independent states to exist among them: and, moreover, when God, by revelation of the truth, constituted the Jews as His Church and people, He gave laws both for their temporal and spiritual concerns; yet He did not thereby distract them into two independent states, but only instituted several functions in the same community.

To come then at once to the point: the question is *not*, whether there be a difference between a Church and a Commonwealth; but it is, as to the *kind* of distinction between them; and whether the Church *now*, in Christian states, should be as distinctly severed

in her policy and government, as she was when under Heathen princes, and in Heathen Commonwealths; so that a Church and a Christian Commonwealth should form two essentially separate and distinct societies.

Now, in Apostolic times, the Church of Rome existed, comprising the whole society of believers there; and as it was not the authorized religion of the state, the Church and the Commonwealth were *then* necessarily distinct and separate. But when whole Rome became Christian, the case was different; for *all* being believers, the Church and Commonwealth became personally *one* society; being a Commonwealth, as regulated by a *civil* code, and being also a Church as under the *spiritual* law of Jesus Christ¹: and though in each there must necessarily have been divers functions, to be discharged by different persons, yet no where can it be held, that two separate societies were thus constituted, independent of each other.

Neither does it impugn this argument, that the Fathers (as is alleged) sometimes mention the Church by way of *contrast* to the Commonwealth: because it is admitted, that the names import two different things; but yet only differing in such a way, as that

¹ Were it otherwise, indeed, then the name of *Church* must be restricted to the *Clergy*, excluding all the residue of believers, both prince and people,

they may harmoniously co-exist in the same subjects, and may mean the same thing under different relations. When we speak of the Commonwealth, for instance, we mean a Society, having (to use a logical phrase) the *accident* of certain civil laws and regulations; and when we name the Church, it is still the *same* Society, having the *accident* of Gospel Truth¹. When, therefore, we speak of the Church, and of the Commonwealth, by way of contrast, it is only in reference to these accidental relations: meaning, by the latter term, the Society as regards its secular affairs; and by the former, the same Society as respects its religious concerns: and we speak of the prosperity of Church or of Commonwealth, according as the affairs of the same State happen to flourish in each department respectively: or when they both do equally well, then we speak of the prosperity of Church and Commonwealth together. David's great munificence to the Temple² evinced his love for the Church; whilst Nehemiah's care in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem³ showed his regard for the Commonwealth: again, Gallio's speech marketh the same

¹ Now, *accidents* always imply *subjects* whereunto they attach; and there is no impediment whereby different accidents may not attach to one and the same subject: *e. g.* the names of Physician and School-master betoken *accidents* which may combine in one and the same individual,

² 1 Chron. xxix. 3.

³ Nehem. ii. 17.

difference, when he said, "if it were a matter of wrong or evil deed," he would hear the cause¹, as being a case of the Commonwealth; but if it "were a question of their Law," he would reject it, as an affair of the Church. Hence, in their different accidental relations, the *names* may be put in contrast, though the subjects or societies to which they attach are the same².

To conclude, 1st, Under the dominion of Infidels, the Church of Christ and the Commonwealth did form *two* separate independent Societies: 2nd, Where the Pope of Rome bears sway, these, though forming essentially one Society, are nevertheless *severed*, and the Church is not permitted to depend upon any civil

¹ Acts xviii. 14, 15.

² An allegation has been set up, drawn from the circumstance, that civil and spiritual penalties are not alway *concurrent*: that, for instance, though a man may be severed from the Church by excommunication, he is not thereby deprived of his civil rights; or, on the other hand, that though a person be disfranchised, he is not thereby cast out of the Church: and hence, that since a person may remain a member of the one, at the very time he is cut off from the other, these two Societies cannot be one and the same. But it may be replied, that the argument will not hold: inasmuch as the combined Society of Church and Commonwealth having, as was before said, divers functions and privileges, a person may be deprived of, or rendered incapable of holding, some *portion* of them, but this does not sever him from the whole; and he still remains a member of the Society, though with abatement of some of his privileges: just as a man may lose his right of voting at an election, but yet still enjoy the common benefit of laws and protection as a citizen.

Prince or Potentate: 3rd, In this realm of England, the Church and Commonwealth, being one Society, the Church is also dependent upon the chief civil Ruler: and, lastly, In this respect we resemble God's ancient elect people, who, as a Church and Commonwealth, were one people, under one Chief Governor, on whom they did all depend.

II. *The NATURE of our Sovereign's SUPREMACY; the FOUNDATION thereof; the MODE and EXTENT of its operation; and the BENEFITS arising therefrom.*

IN all the foregoing allegations, towards proving the essential diversity between Church and Commonwealth, and the respective independence of the one upon the other, the chief *object* is to show that, in a Christian kingdom, Ecclesiastical Supremacy cannot lawfully be held by the Civil Ruler, so far as to order and dispose of spiritual affairs in the Church; and hence the question arises, "How far, in this realm, our laws are correct, in vesting such a supreme power in our Sovereign."

It will, therefore, be necessary, first, to define *what* this power is; then successively to show, by what *right*, after what *sort*, in what *degree*, by what *rule*, with what *conveniency*, and after whose *example*, Christian kings may be invested with it. And, after these

generalities, to exhibit the lawfulness of the details thereof: such as the Title of Headship; the prerogative of summoning Councils, of sanctioning Church-laws, of appointing Prelates, of holding supreme judicial authority, and of exemption from certain kind of censures.

1st, As respects the question, “*What* this power of dominion is.” No society can exist without order¹: hence the Apostolic injunction, that “all things be done in order²:” and order, being a *gradual disposition*, necessarily involves a distinction of degrees between persons and things. Indeed, Deity itself hath exhibited this, as well in the original work of creation of things, as also in the subsequent conservation thereof³.

Now, order is the work of policy, furnished with power, either inherent or delegated; and, if the power have nothing to overrule it, it is supreme, so far as its bounds extend.

When, therefore, Christian Kings are said to have supreme ecclesiastical power, the exercise thereof is limited to their own territories. And there, moreover, it is not *absolute*: for—(not to notice the utter absurdity of supposing that anything resembling God’s supremacy is here meant)—the power must be exer-

¹ Luke xi. 17.

² 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

³ See Book i. page 6.

cised in conformity with the law that sanctions it, according to the axiom, “*Attribuat rex legi, quod lex attribuit ei, potestatem et dominium :*” neither is the Sovereign’s power, though greater than that of any one, superior to that of all the societies conjoined, whereon he exercises rule. This supremacy briefly implies, only the exclusion of *all* foreign powers, and of *any several* powers domestical; so as that not any of them can have higher authority than he, or over-rule him.

Next, as regards the *right* whereon this is founded. Some hold that supreme ecclesiastical power, extending throughout the world, is vested in the *Pope* of Rome; others, that it belongs in every National Church to the *Clergy* thereof; whereas we hold, in opposition to each of these, that every *King*, within his own dominions, may exercise it: and we proceed to show how this power is derived to them.

In the first place, it seems clear, that even as a free and unfettered individual hath power over himself; so, previously to any form of government being established, every independent multitude hath entire dominion over itself, and can determine the mode of society under which it shall choose to live. But as an individual, originally free, may yet become the servant of another; so the power of whole societies

may be derived unto a *few*, or even unto *one*, in subjection to whom the rest must live.

This supreme power may be the result of lawful *conquest*; and, as it is God that giveth victory, the conqueror is thereby invested with that power over the conquered, which the law of nations authorizes. Sometimes, as in the case of the Israelites, it arises from special *divine appointment*; and sometimes it is given by human appointment, being *delegated* by those who enjoy the privilege of choosing for themselves. In every case, however, when Kings or Governors are *once established*, their authority must be considered as approved by God, and themselves as His vicegerents.

Supreme ecclesiastical power being nowhere in Scripture either assigned to Kings, as such, or denied them, Christian Kings seem to be invested therewith solely by *human* authority.

But whenever supreme power has been bestowed on any, although only by man's discretion, they must be considered as holding it by *divine right*. For, if God's word have appointed the power itself, leaving the selection of the person to exercise it to man's discretion; or even if both the power and the persons to exercise it, be established by men themselves; in each case, *when so established*, the consequent rights and duties thereof must, on Scripture-warrant, be exacted

and performed¹. So that unto Kings, by human right, honour is due by divine right: man's ordinances being frequently *pre-supposed* as grounds in the statutes of God. And, therefore, by whatever means Governors are lawfully advanced to their station, we are thenceforward bound, by the law of God, to obey them, in whatever affairs their power may serve to command. Thus God doth *ratify* that sovereign authority, originating merely in *human* appointment.

Such being the *ground* of right, we consider, secondly, after *what sort* this supreme power is held and exercised: and in so doing, we shall confine our remarks to the constitution of our own nation, wherein the King hath universal dominion indeed, but yet with a dependence on the whole *entire body*, over the several parts whereof he exercises it; being "*major singulis, universis minor.*"

Notwithstanding, however, such dependency, the kingly power is *hereditary*; the original conveyance thereof, when it was derived by the *whole* into the *one*, causes the lawful successors in blood to hold it, not as a personal gift, but as an indefeasible *right*: except in cases where natural or legal inability renders

¹ The power of the Romans, for instance, over foreign provinces, was not a thing instituted by God's law, nor yet was the exercise of it given thereby to Tiberius Cæsar; yet the payment of tribute to Cæsar (Matt. xxii. 21) is the express law of Christ.

them incapable of it. And the same causes also produce a continuance of that *dependency* of the King upon the whole, which accompanied the first conveyance. Original influence of power from the body into the King is the cause of the King's dependency, in power, upon the body.

By this dependency are meant subordination and subjection; and a proof of its existence is, that when in reference to the Head there is a defect of *heirs*, the power reverteth back to the body itself: just as lands, in such a case, fall by escheat to the lord thereof, under whom they are held. Thus power resides originally and fundamentally in the body, and derivatively in the Head. Now, as it seems clear that the body politic cannot justly withdraw the power when once given¹ (except, indeed, with the *consent* of the holders thereof, or, as has been said, by *escheat*), there must be grave consideration *before* it be granted, as to the limitations and conditions whereon it is so granted. Hence, in the third place, we come to consider in what *degree* and *measure*, Kings may exercise their power. And this is *various*; Kings by conquest fix their own charter; and their power, both in spirituals and tem-

¹ The anointing or coronation of Kings under the Law, did not imply that the kingdom was, by such solemnities, *given* to each individual, and that the Kings were *elective*; but they only constituted a public testification of the inheritor's *right*, and a mode of inducting him into his legal possession thereof.

porals, is limited only by the law of God and nature: Kings by God's special appointment, have that extent of power which He chooses to assign: and Kings instituted by original compact with their people, have that power which either such compact bestows, or which hath been still further increased by express enactments, or silent custom growing at length into prescriptive right: by which process, indeed, it often happens that a power originating in violence, hath been gradually softened down into a pleasant and desirable mode of government.

This kingly power, when properly restrained by law,—but yet not so restrained as to deprive it of supremacy in the very highest matters, which would reduce it to a *name* rather than a reality,—seems to be the most perfect form of government. Where the King doth guide the state, and the law the King, then the whole is harmoniously attuned to general good; even as it hath been well said, ὁ μὲν βασιλεὺς νόμιμος, ὁ δὲ ἄρχων ἀκόλουθος, ὁ δὲ ἀρχόμενος ἐλεύθερος, ἡ δ' ὅλη κοινωνία εὐδαίμων¹.”

Hence are apparent the wisdom and beauty of our own Constitution, wherein no person or cause is unsubjected to the King's power; and yet this is so limited, that the law itself is in all things the rule of

¹ “The King ruling by law,—the magistrate following,—the subject free,—the whole society happy.”

his proceeding; whence the axiom "*Lex facit regem*:" the King's grant of anything contrary to law is void, because "*Rex nihil potest quod non jure potest*." Whilst the very ceremonies of their crowning, enthroning, and anointing, severally and significantly imply their legal supremacy in matters military, judicial, and religious.

It is, indeed, on all hands admitted, that in the two former cases of military and judicial matters, Kings have the supreme authority: but a question is raised, whether they may lawfully exercise it in religious affairs. And yet even in this case, there is also a *seeming* agreement; for Papists themselves admit, that "the civil magistrate may by his edicts and laws, keep all ecclesiastical persons within the bounds of their duties, and constrain them to observe the canons of the Church, to follow the rules of ancient discipline;" and that he "may have power to lay corporal punishment on teachers of perverse things; to make laws for the peace of the Church, to proclaim, defend, and preserve (even by punishment), the very *dogmata* or articles of religion from violation." From which, and other similar admissions, the King's supremacy in matters ecclesiastical, would at once seem established: but then this seeming admission is nullified by a *secret reserve*, implying that it is only so "in case the Pope permit, or prohibit not."

And the Puritan objectors make also as ample

general admissions, respecting the King's "pre-eminence, supremacy, and prerogative," extending "over all persons, and in all things;" but yet, when they come to specific details, there are such deductions and special limitations, as reduce it, in the matter of their own Church-discipline, to a mere nullity. Indeed, this contradiction between their general proposition and their particular details, seems to arise from the abstract force of truth, in that the lawfulness of kingly power compels them to admit, what their own prejudices and passions subsequently urge them to disclaim.

All parties, however, seem, notwithstanding, fully to agree in the following points:—1st, That Kings *may* have supremacy, and exercise dominion, in the matters of religion, as a whole : 2nd, That some particular actions thereof they cannot exercise, *viz.* those of the power of *order*, and the jurisdiction inseparably conjoined therewith ; of administration of the Sacraments ; of Ordination, Excommunication, and the like : 3rd, That even in those points wherein they have power, it must be nevertheless limited according as their civil power is, by certain regulations of law : howbeit, this latter hath not been agreed upon so definitely as might be wished.

And hence, 4thly, we are led to consider, by what

rule it is, that a King's power in things ecclesiastical should be regulated. Now as it hath been already stated, in reference to civil affairs, that the King is supreme, but yet only so in accordance to, or in concurrence with, the law of the land: even so, in matters ecclesiastical, the axiom holds, "*Imperator bonus intra ecclesiam, non supra ecclesiam*;" kings have dominion therein, but only "according to the laws of the Church;" concurrent with them he hath supreme authority, but against them none.

And, as in civil matters, it would be thought wrong, if a King, even in conjunction with the whole body, should in his own state do any thing in violation of the general law of nations: so, by analogy, it would be improper for anything to be done, even by King and law together, in matters of religion, contrary to those generally received opinions and customs of the Christian world, sanctioned by the reverent estimation of ages, which, as expressed by the General Councils¹,

¹ Hence the law; "That Judges shall not condemn as heresy, any thing but what heretofore hath been so adjudged, by the authority of the Canonical Scripture, or by the first four General Councils, or by some other general Council, wherein the same hath been declared heresy by the express words of the said Canonical Scriptures; or such as shall be hereafter termed heresy by the high Court of Parliament of this realm, with the assent of the Clergy in convocation." Wherein we see the influence and authority that the decrees of these four General Councils still continued to have.

were to form a requisite part of the rule, whereby ecclesiastical dominion was to be limited.

And this brings us to mention, in the fifth place, the *conveniency* of deriving supreme power from a whole multitude into some special part thereof. For thereby public affairs are expedited, confusion and trouble saved, and the jarring conflicts between private advantage and common good, avoided. The *end* of all government being the common good, we consider it is best attained by deriving supreme dominion over all into one. “No man can serve two masters,” saith the Saviour¹; and *two* or more supreme masters might obviously cause much mischievous disturbance to the public weal, by the possibility of their ordering things at the same time, contradictory to each other.

III. *Our Kings' Ecclesiastical Supremacy formed on a* SCRIPTURE MODEL.

AND lastly, as a striking example of the benefits arising from vesting all supreme authority in one person, and a Scripture warrant for doing the same, we may cite the Jewish Polity, wherein Moses, though imparting authority to others, retained unto himself the entire supremacy; and Jehoshaphat, and other kings of God's own chosen people, acted in the same manner. Why therefore may not Christian kings be

¹ Matt. vi. 24.

similarly invested? It is no valid answer to allege (as hath been done), “the superiority of Christianity over Judaism;” or that “theirs was a religion of settled and *prescribed* forms, which required simply to be executed according to the letter; whereas ours is one of mysterious doctrines, and various ordinances, not specifically set down in writing:” or again, that “Judaism was armed with power to inflict temporal punishment, which kings therefore might wield; whereas Christianity wields the spiritual sword, which none may use but those who have power to bind or loose;” or still further, that “the Jewish polity consisted only of *one* people; whereas the Church being spread over all nations, mischief might arise, if every separate king were invested with ecclesiastical power:” for indeed not any of these allegations prove that it is contrary either to the law of God, or of nature, for Christian kings to possess all supremacy of external power, to preserve order, quietness, and peace, in their respective dominions.

Even the Heathens, with their inferior notions in religion, committed the supreme power therein to their highest civil officers, as being the most suited to exercise it: and is it fitting, that with our sure and certain hopes of things so infinitely superior, we should be blamed, in acting similarly? For it is a gross mistake to imagine, that regal power is instituted only for

the good of the body, and not of the *soul*; or that kings should merely provide for the temporal welfare of their subjects, as for so many soul-less animals. Hence, though as hath been stated, they may not execute ghostly offices, or administer sacraments,—they may direct the outward government of the Church; and the first allegation just mentioned, as to the *superiority* of Christianity to Judaism, would seem therefore to make it at least quite as incumbent upon *us* to adopt the custom, as it was upon the Jews.

And in regard to the second allegation, which asserts that the ordinances and doctrines of Christianity require more skill and knowledge in divine things than Judaism, it may be fairly questioned, from the great niceties and distinctions of Judaism, whether it does so; moreover, also, Jewish divines were *civil* lawyers as well as ecclesiastical, and consequently needed to use much labour, and to possess much skill. But after all, it toucheth not the question, as to the supreme authority which Christian kings may possess for directing the general affairs of religion, even as Jewish ones did.

In reference to the third allegation, it may be remarked, that the Jewish Church wielded the spiritual sword, as well as the Christian Church does; degrading and excommunicating. And, though, in the first instance, Christ's Church had not the temporal sword,

inasmuch as His religion was to be quietly and peaceably propagated among all nations, by those who had no civil authority; yet when His religion was established, and whole kingdoms were made Christian, does it not seem reasonable, that the same temporal power which the Jewish Church had, in addition to her spiritual, might be usefully and safely conceded to the Christian Church? Nay, doth not the very custom, which many Christian Churches have, of applying to the civil magistrate, for coercion in matters connected with her affairs, of itself prove this?

And as to the fourth allegation, that the diffusion of Christianity over many nations, would cause great dissimilitude in the exercise of Christian religion, were every King to have supreme power over the Church; we reply, that the way to prevent this—(which is a thing to be avoided)—is, not to submit the whole of Christendom to the tyranny of only one pastor,—the serious evils whereof have been already experienced; but rather for each nation to frame its government substantially to one Christian law, of equal force and influence to the law of nations in civil matters: and till this desirable event shall happen, for each Church to keep as near as possible to the order it ought to have; even as Judah did, when it differed, in its religious forms, from those which Israel followed,

Hence we conclude, that in a free Christian state, where the self-same people are Church and Commonwealth, God through Christ leading them to appoint that their Sovereign shall have supreme power in matters ecclesiastical as well as civil; they do, in adopting this custom, not repugnant either to reason or Scripture, act both wisely and well.

IV. *On our Sovereign being styled* HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

AFTER this general view of the matter, we now come to the objection raised against styling our King the “Head of the Church.” But, if he have the *substance* itself of supreme power, why should the designatory title thereof be denied? It seems but a natural consequence, that the style should accompany the actual power.

And as to the objection, that “Christ alone is the Head of the Church, and that the Scriptures in various places give this title expressly to Him¹,” it is answered by at once stating, that we attribute not the title at all, in *the same sense* wherein Scripture gives it to Christ; no more than when we style any mortal man “lord,” can we thereby be imagined to mean the same thing as when we call Christ “Lord.” Were

¹ Eph. i. 20, 22, 23; Col. i. 16, 18.

it, indeed, a matter liable to misconstruction in this way, so that there could be any possible encroachment on our Saviour's prerogative imagined thereby, then reason would, that it should not be adopted; but, as this is not the case,—and as, in common acceptation, it conveys no more than that the Sovereign has, in ecclesiastical matters, the same supreme power of government as in civil,—we hesitate not to bestow that title which best describes the thing signified.

For, indeed, the Headship of Christ over His Church differs *entirely* from that of any other, both in *order*, in *measure*, and in *kind*. He is “ὕπὲρ πάντα, above all; ὑπεράνω πάσης τῆς ἀρχῆς, far above all principality and power¹.” He is unlimited, in measure either of place or time, being eternally and unlimitedly Head over all: and He is, moreover, *the Spiritual Head*, whence proceedeth ghostly life and strength to all. Whereas the headship we give to Kings is merely the *external* government of the framework of the Church amongst ourselves; so that, as hath been said, no possibility of mistake on this point can exist.

But it has again been objected, that “inasmuch as Christ's headship over the Church arises from His being *Son of Man*, and His government over the world from His being *Son of God*, it is incongruous to

¹ Eph. i. 21.

consider any civil magistrate,—whose authority, as such, is from God,—as a subordinate head of Christ, in that peculiar capacity which He so holds under the Father as Son of Man.”

But Christ, as the incarnate Word consubstantial with God, by and with whom the Father did create all things, and by and with whom He continues to guide all things, is Lord or Head over all, in absolute sovereignty, and hath no more a superior in governing the Church, than He hath in ruling the universe. There is no necessity that all things spoken of Christ should correspond to Him *severally*, either as God or Man: but some, as He is the consubstantial Word of God; and some, as He is that same Word incarnate. The works of supreme dominion, which have been since the beginning wrought by the power of the Son of God, are now most truly and properly the works of the Son of Man; the “Word being made flesh,” doth sit for ever and reign as Sovereign over all. Dominion belongeth unto His kingly office,—Propitiation and Mediation unto His priestly,—and Instruction unto His pastoral or prophetic office. By His Providence He upholds and preserves kingdoms and people; and, by the same Providence, He guides, comforts, and supports His Church and His own elect; executing the latter offices in virtue of the self-same omnipotent and divine power, as He does the former. And hence

it is a manifest error, to suppose that Christ, in the government of the world, is equal to the Father, but that He is not so in the government of the Church¹. It is true, that when the end of all things cometh, and there is no Church-militant on earth, then the peculiar part of His office of governing the Church will obviously of necessity cease, and glorified believers shall receive everlasting joys and felicity, and “God shall be all in all;” but, in the mean time, Christ, as a King, reigneth supreme, as well over the works of His providence and over kingdoms, as also over His Church.

Hence, then, as all authority is derived from God through Christ, and whatever hath a necessary being originates from Him; so human dominion, being ne-

¹ This error hath arisen from misconceiving that Christ governs His Church in His character of *Mediator*, wherein He is inferior to the Father. Whereas His power over the Church belongs to His *Kingly* office, as the *Mediatorship* does to His priestly. For, as the High-Priest, under the Old Testament, offered sacrifice for expiation of the people's sins, and then entered into the holy place to make intercession for them; so Christ, having finished upon the cross that part of His priestly office, which wrought the expiation of our sins, did afterwards enter into Heaven as the Mediator of the New Testament, and appear before God for us.

In like manner, it is a mistake, that civil authority is only from God, and not mediately through Christ, nor subordinately to Him: for “there is no power (saith the Apostle) but from God;” nor doth anything come from God but mediately by Jesus Christ. Indeed, the objectors admit that these words of the Old Testament are applicable to Him; “By me kings reign, and princes decree justice” (Prov. viii. 16); and in the New Testament this doctrine is taught, “That Christ is the Prince of the kings of the earth.” (Rev. i. 5.)

cessary for the well-being of the world, must be from Him, and consequently have reference of subordination to Him. The power, therefore, which civil magistrates have in ecclesiastical affairs, is from God through Christ; and being necessary for the due ordering of religion and the good of His Church, is more peculiarly of and under Him, as being Head of the Church. "All things (says the Apostle, speaking to the Church) are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's¹." Kings are Christ's, both as *saints*, and as *kings*: as *saints*, because they are *of* the Church; as *kings*, because they are in authority *over* the Church. This authority extends over all persons and causes, within their respective dominions, and in this sense we style them Heads: this authority they have received of Christ, because from Him all lawful powers are; and they hold it under Him as being Lord of all. Hence, the civil magistrate, in the exercise of this power, is a subordinate head of God's people².

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.

² There are sundry other objections raised, in a cavilling spirit: as, for instance, 1st, "That as Christ is *always present* with the Church, which is His body, there is no need for any *subordinate* head." But this is answered by the consideration, that the *external* visible government of the Church is necessary for its orderly arrangement; and that it hath nothing to do with that invisible *spiritual* rule which Christ exercises over His mystical body. Again, 2ndly, "That if a magistrate be the *head* of the Church, he cannot be *of* the Church, because *all* the Church constituteth the *body* of Christ." But here,

But, after all, it is not so much the *title* itself of Head, that is objected to, which perhaps we might be willing to change, were that all that was required, (notwithstanding the precedent in Scripture wherein God names Saul ‘Head of all the tribes of Israel,’ including the ecclesiastical one of Levi,)—it is not, we say, so much the title itself that is objected to, as the *actual power* which it implies to be given to the civil magistrate, and which the objectors contend ought to be exercised by another set of men.

It has been already stated, that there is this distinction between the title of *Head*, when given to other governors, and when given to Christ; viz. that the Dominion which it imports is *not the same* in both: He is the fountain of spiritual life and blessings poured into His Church; *they* are but principal instruments for its outward government: He is Head, as founder of the house; they, as His chief overseers. And this distinction, therefore, between spiritual and mystical headship in Christ, and the ministerial and external headship given to others, clearly derogates not at all from the honour of Christ.

again, the sophism arises from confounding the visible and the spiritual conditions of the Church. Visible heads, with various Churches over which they rule, are but inferior parts of the spiritual body, which is but one, and Christ its Head. There are other objections; but, as they all arise from a sophistical overstraining of analogies, it is unnecessary to advert to them further.

But yet this is, nevertheless, assailed as being untenable; because, as is alleged, “If there be no Head but Christ, in respect of *spiritual* government, then the visible power over the Church, being only in relation to the word, the sacraments, and discipline, (administered by those whom Christ hath appointed thereunto,) the exercise of this power is also *His* spiritual government;” and, consequently, that our distinction between external and spiritual is a vain one.

Now, the general government of Christ over His Church having been already considered, in two distinct points of view,—the one mystical and spiritual, whereby He alone is Head; the other external, whereby He administers through others, as instruments: this latter administrative power may be divided into that of *Order*, and that of *Regimen*. And both of these are indeed spiritual, and both are His: that of Order, because properly concerning the things of the Spirit, and instituted by Him; that of external Regimen, because also belonging to things spiritual and approved by Him. But yet neither of them is spiritual in the *same manner* that His peculiar invisibly-exercised power is; nor yet are they in such sense His, as that which He *personally* exerciseth. Hence, there clearly may be a power exercised by men visibly and externally in the Church, severed and totally dif-

ferent from that invisible power which is peculiarly His, and which worketh secretly and inwardly in the hearts and souls of men, through the blessed Spirit, giving grace, life, and salvation ; and which, therefore, no other can possibly exercise. And hence, we term Him, in this latter sense, our *only* Head ; but, in the former sense, we may style others also Heads, subordinate to Him ¹.

V. *The King's Supremacy shown in the power of SUMMONING PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES AND COUNCILS.*

THE summoning of Public Assemblies of the people seems always to have been considered a mark of Regal supremacy ; and this, whether in matters civil or ecclesiastical. And it was considered such in the case of Simon, when “no man might gather any great assembly in the land without him².” In virtue of this royal prerogative it was, that David³, Solomon⁴, and other Jewish kings, gathered Israel together, as well in the affairs of the Church as in civil matters.

¹ As to the objection arising from Christ's presence, “‘wherever two or three are gathered together’ in the external Church, wherein He must of course actually execute His office of Head, and therefore no other is required ;” it is a mere sophism, answered by the arguments already urged in reference to the distinction between invisible and external power.

² 1 Macc. xiv. 44.

³ 1 Chron. xv. 3, 4.

⁴ 1 Kings viii. 1.

It was also held as an Imperial prerogative; and hence, until the Roman Emperors became Christians, no general Synods were held; the greatest being till then, only meetings of Bishops and others in one single province. Constantine was the first that called, or devised the calling of any General Council on the affairs of the Church; and his example seems to have been strictly followed by his successors, so that no Synod was accounted a General one, that had not the imperial sanction. Thus commenced that authority, which we contend Sovereigns may lawfully have, respecting ecclesiastical meetings; the Bishops, it may be, originating or suggesting such meetings, but only holding them through permission and appointment of the chief ruler.

VI. *On the King's power in making* ECCLESIASTICAL LAWS.

THE natural subject of Power, is the whole body of the Commonwealth, whose well-being depends much upon the nature of its laws: and hence, even in Monarchies, there has ever been a jealousy of confiding the power of legislation to one individual; and from this analogy of civil legislation, the power also of making ecclesiastical laws belongs to the whole body of that Church for which they are made. And as equals cannot impose laws upon equals, nor one indi-

vidual indifferently upon another, neither may one Church on another; unless, indeed, they can show sufficient warrant to the contrary. But each Church as a whole body, may clearly legislate for her own particular children, and from them exact obedience, generally and individually.

Now no position is more assailed by the Church of Rome, than that this power of Jurisdiction (in which they include spiritual dominion) should be vested in the whole Church; inasmuch as it tendeth to overthrow the Pope's supremacy, and to elevate General Councils above him. Hence they hold that the power is derived from CHRIST, not into the *whole body* of the Church, but only into the *Prelacy*.

This, however, seems to arise from the neglect of distinction between the *institution* of a power, and the appointment of the *person* in whom it shall be vested. And this investiture of power may be given either to one or more definite individuals, or to a class of persons possessing certain qualifications.

Sometimes, indeed, as often happened among the Israelites, God himself specially appoints the persons to be invested with power. And thus Christ also, having given the *Church* the power now treated of, whatever her appointed agents did was considered as *her own act*. And whereas Christ did, in the first instance, appoint special persons to hold this power;

yet their *successors*, not having such special investiture from Christ himself, exercise it in virtue of being the authorized agents of the Church, in which it was instituted.

The Church, then, having this power, the question is, whether a Monarch, whose whole kingdom receives Christianity, may therein lawfully exercise the power of dominion, in matters ecclesiastical, as amply as is done in this our land; or whether, in matters of ecclesiastical legislation, the Clergy alone may have power to make laws, without the consent of the Laity, or the assent of the Sovereign.

Now, omitting the inconsistencies of the Puritan objectors herein,—who sometimes insist, that all laws must in every particular be from God; and sometimes admit, that in certain points the Church hath power to institute;—we may remark, that Laws may be requisite, as well in matters of Doctrine as of Practice. For although the law of nature and the law of God do fully and plainly declare “whatever is necessary for salvation,” as between each individual and God; yet—(albeit there is a similar provision in Scripture for it, as respects all matters of *weighty* importance)—for man in his social capacity, and as a member of the body politic of Christ’s Church, it may on some occasions, and from existing circumstances, be necessary, that the Church should establish certain

ordinances, and declare certain deductions from Scripture, for the regulation of life and guidance of belief.

In the former particular of *ordinances*, the Church hath clearly power of appointment, and thus can make that to be consequently a duty, which was not so before. But in the latter, she hath not a similar power to make that to be *truth*, which before was not so; she can only notify and declare, having no power to compel belief; this is God's prerogative, who ruleth the heart and mind. But she may, for the sake of public unity, require professed assent, or prohibit contradiction, to certain special articles of doctrine; since, otherwise, grievous detriment might arise to men's souls generally.

But, as hath been just said, the Church has clearly, in virtue of its character as a Christian society, the power which all free societies possess, of legislating for her own community: and if the whole Commonwealth and people thereof be Christian, then they, as such, constitute the Church.

It has, however, been contended, that the power of ecclesiastical legislation is vested solely in the Clergy in their Synods; and this, as grounded upon what took place at the Council at Jerusalem¹, whose decision was a law to all the Gentile Churches; and is an example in point, that the Apostles, and their

¹ Acts xv. 6—30.

successors the Clergy, have this power in the Church of God.

But that Council was one *sui generis* ; it consisted of inspired Apostles acting under the special guidance of the Spirit ; and hence, what things “ unto the Holy Ghost and them seemed good ¹, ” were of *divine* ordinance, and therefore absolutely binding on the whole Church of Christ. Whereas, subsequent Clerical Councils can only lay claim to the general and *ordinary* influence of the Spirit ; and consequently, they can challenge no such authoritative power. Besides, also, the state of the Church was not at that time, such as it is now, neither in respect of Princes nor Clergy : and until, therefore, some special ordinance of Christ can be brought forward, to prove that such power belongs solely to the Clergy, we contend that no ecclesiastical law can be made, in a Christian Commonwealth, without the consent, as well of the Laity as of the Clergy ; and least of all, without that of the Sovereign.

Indeed it seems clearly against all equity, that a man should be punished for non-observance of that, whereunto he never, in his social capacity, gave his consent, either immediately or mediately ; and the axiom seems undeniable, “ Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet ². ” Were it other-

¹ Acts xv. 28.

² Pope Nicholas admits this, when, though not allowing even the

wise, the Clergy might impose laws most injurious to the rights of others; and thus destroy that proper balance, which is so essential to the well-being of estates, and which is best accomplished, when the Sovereign hath the superintendence in the legislation that is to affect all alike.

To say nothing of the practice of Christian kingdoms anciently on this point, wherein it cannot be shown that any law of an Ecclesiastical Synod alone received general authoritative force without royal sanction, the example in the promulgation of the decree of the Council of Trent, by Philip of Spain, within his own dominions, establishes this position. For in so doing, he added certain special provisions, *limiting* the effects of that decree, as regarded the privileges of himself and vassals. And in virtue of the same power, whereby he thus excepted against one portion, he might clearly have also excepted against others, or even all. Hence, until the head of a nation sanctions any canon, it can possess no legal force in his dominion, any more than the statutes of a college or body corporate can, until it receive the consent of its rector: unless, indeed, by making the Clergy independent legislators, we choose to depose

very highest of the Laity to be present at Synods, he nevertheless seems to except those cases wherein "matters of faith common to all, and interesting both Laity and Clergy, are to be discussed."

the Sovereign from that rightful power, which even inferior rulers possess.

It has been objected, that it is not competent for a Parliament to pass Ecclesiastical laws ; inasmuch as it is itself a mere temporal court, having no power, as such, in spirituals ; and the King, as its head, having also, as such, no power over the Church, cannot communicate any to it ; and consequently that no Church regulations, made by them conjointly, can be valid.

Now the *Parliament*, conjoined with the *Convocation*, is that, whereupon the very essence of all government in this kingdom doth depend ; it is even the *body of the whole realm* ; inasmuch as it compriseth the Head thereof, and all the subject-members, either personally, or mediately through their representatives. And hence it hath authoritative power in all matters, ecclesiastical as well as civil. This was admitted even in Papal times ; for when, in Mary's reign, the Pope's Legate came over, and the Parliament undertook to pacify him, by *repealing* certain laws passed about Church affairs ; what need was there for such repeal, if the laws were themselves null and void, as they must have been, if the argument raised against this were at all sound. The very power of repeal establishes that of legislation. And this was further seen in the fact, that when certain dispensatory decrees of the Legate were made, in order to give *apostolicæ*

firmitatis rebus to what, in his opinion, had previously taken place irregularly, in reference to Church matters, it was nevertheless still thought necessary to *confirm* and sanction such decrees by an Act of Parliament.

As the best course for legislation seems to be, to gather the opinions of those best skilled in the matters to be legislated upon; so the Pastors and Bishops seem to be the fittest persons to devise and originate modes and rules in all religious affairs. But until their counsels receive the sanction of the *whole Church*, to give them the force of laws, they cannot bind any individual thereof. And hence, the assent and approbation of Parliament is necessary, to give authoritative force to Ecclesiastical laws.

The supremacy of power which our Sovereigns have herein, seems to consist chiefly in their possessing a negative voice or *veto*, upon any proposed law. And this is accordant to the practice of Christian Princes, from the age of Constantine downwards; and it is only analogous to the exercise of the same power in civil matters, wherein the Sovereign, as head of his people, is empowered to prevent what might seem prejudicial to the general good of the whole Church and State. Neither is this repugnant to the dutiful subjection which even Princes owe to their Pastors in their *ministerial* capacity, as dispensers of

the Word and Sacraments: but both may well harmonize together.

It is not at all meant, that the laws thus made receive their force from any *inherent* power in the Sovereign, and imparted also by him to Parliament; but from that power which the whole body of this realm, as a Christian realm and Church, hath freely *derived* unto him that ruleth over them; and hence the laws so made, do take their power originally from the Church of Christ itself.

As to the Puritan statement, that Ecclesiastical governors may not legislate in civil matters, nor, *vice versâ*, Civil magistrates in Church affairs; it seems somewhat contradictory, that they who object that ecclesiastical persons should *κυριευσειν*, *be lords*, should nevertheless claim for them the privilege of lords and governors in the matter of *legislation*. As we have said, it seems to be the peculiar province of spiritual persons, though not to establish, yet to *devise*, laws for the Church; but this does not deprive them of a concurrent voice in establishing such Civil laws as Civil governors may devise. And in *establishing* both descriptions of laws, is there any law of Christ that forbiddeth Sovereigns to exercise supreme power? If so, then, indeed, the controversy is at an end.

But it is clear, that Christ in His Church, hath

established *no* such law, in reference to temporal power; and that in this respect it is totally different from the Commonwealth of Israel.

And in reference to the spiritual law of the Gospel, they who first received it were scattered about in divers kingdoms; and the Rulers thereof not being Christians, they were necessarily obliged to adopt such regulations for their own Church, as seemed to them fittest; the Civil magistrate not interfering therein.

When, however, whole kingdoms became Christian, evidently the entire case was altered: unless it be maintained—which it cannot be without absurdity—that Kings, by becoming Christian, did divest themselves of a part of that sovereign power which they had as Infidels, and must henceforward submit to the dominion either of certain domestic superiors, or else of some foreign potentate. Now this is quite contradicted by the whole tenor of the Gospel; and it is clear, that what Kings might, as such, do previously, in matters of a false religion, they might still continue to do, after their conversion, in support of the true Christian religion ¹.

¹ There are occasions, when even the Puritans allow that Kings may exercise ecclesiastical power; as when, for instance, the Ministry is no lawful Ministry; and by *no lawful*, it may be observed, they mean in this case a *wicked* Ministry; then they admit, that the wickedness of a Ministry depriving it of its rights of spiritual legis-

To conclude : it is on all sides admitted, that to the Sovereign belongs the power of *maintaining* the laws of the Church ; but his power in *making* them is by some impugned. And yet it is nevertheless admitted, that in ancient times, no ecclesiastical canon of any Council even, had authoritative force, till it received the Emperor's confirmation. Why, then, should the practice of our Church be condemned, when, after all, it only gives the Sovereign a power similar in kind, but by no means equal in degree, to that of former times ?

VII. *On the APPOINTMENT TO BISHOPRICKS being vested in the Sovereign.*

WE next come to consider of the power vested in our Sovereign, of appointing Bishops. Now, with respect to a Prelate, there are three things to be considered : the *power* whereby he is distinguished over

lation, the Sovereign is empowered to legislate. But supposing the *King* be also wicked ; then, on their own showing, the power must pass from him. And whither, then, must it descend ? To the *godly* amongst the people, forsooth ! In fact, the Puritan objectors have been driven into what thus seems so absurd, by a secret desire to overthrow the English Clergy, which they assert to be universally wicked, and therefore *no* Ministry ; and hence they are willing to admit the Sovereign to the exercise of power, for the purpose of installing *themselves* in the Ministry, and then they will ease him of his prerogative, and become sole Ecclesiastical legislators themselves.

other pastors; the *locality* wherein it is to be exercised; and the *honours* and emoluments belonging to his office: the first of these he hath, by his consecration, the second by his election, and the third he receives from the Sovereign alone.

With the *consecration* the King hath nothing to do; it being solely given by Bishops. In the matter of *election*, various modes have obtained: in ancient times, it seems probable that each Presbyter in the College succeeded to the Episcopate by seniority; and when elections, strictly so speaking, arose, the choice seems to have been amongst the Presbyters themselves; the people, by acclamation or otherwise, testifying their approbation or dislike.

The difference which exists as to the choice of Bishops with us, and in their appointment being virtually vested in the Sovereign, arises from the latter having provided the Episcopal residences, and endowed them with ample possessions. Hence they may reasonably seem to be entitled to the privilege of personal appointment¹. And, indeed, the privilege of creating temporal Peers being restricted to the King, since Bishops with us are Peers of the realm,

¹ Precisely on the same grounds as Patrons enjoy the privilege of presenting to Livings, because of their having endowed the Livings. But in each case there is no *spiritual* power exercised; the persons are already ordained, and fit and competent to their office. See Book v. Page 286, and Book vii. Page 364.

it would seem somewhat incongruous, were others to have the privilege of advancing them to this dignity. Hence our mode of electing Bishops is merely *formal*, to meet certain canonical regulations, and it is the Sovereign's choice which really appoints them.

In this, however, England is not alone: foreign nations have adopted a similar practice, as is evident from history. For many centuries¹, the appointment of the Bishop of Rome seems not to have been complete, without the Emperor's sanction; and this their right of investiture to have been acknowledged by the Popes themselves. This practice appears to have been also adopted in Spain, Hungary, and Scotland, without opposition, on the ground that as Sovereigns endowed and protected Prelacies, they were entitled to the nomination of individuals to fill stations, so important and influential in their respective kingdoms.

But leaving the practice of other Christian States,—which, however, ought not to be without its due and proper weight in the grave consideration of such a question,—the practice is fully established with us, and sufficiently warranted, unless, indeed, some law of God or nature could be brought forward as forbidding it.

And, truly, there seem to be many advantages

¹ From Justinian, A. D. 550, down to Hildebrand, A. D. 1080.

arising from it. First, the avoidance of unseemly disturbances and disgraceful ferments, which generally took place when popular elections were held; even sometimes, as is on record, to the shedding of blood¹.

As, however, we have adopted a mode which is thus free from such objectionable proceedings, and given unto our Sovereigns the right of Episcopal appointment, it behoves them to consider the serious *responsibility* of this power: and in their selection of individuals, to remember that all ought to be done to the edification of the Church; that they are in the position, as it were, of *guardians* over a pupil, whose interests they are under a solemn obligation to consult; and that, therefore, it will be a grievous fault, if any other motives prevail with them, than those of the competency, piety, and exemplary and devout lives of the parties whom they advance to so high and holy a dignity.

VIII. *On the SOVEREIGN'S JUDICIAL SUPREMACY over all Persons and Causes ecclesiastical.*

VARIOUS mistaken notions have been entertained, respecting the sort of Supremacy held by our Sove-

¹ St. Jerome complains sadly of this; and in A. D. 366 the disputes ran so high that the Emperor Valentinian was obliged to interfere; and the blood of 137 persons was shed on the occasion.

reign in the Church. By some it hath been imagined for instance, that they may prescribe for the administration of the Word and Sacraments, and that they may personally hear and decide judicially, in ecclesiastical matters, and in questions of Christian faith. Now these opinions are quite unfounded. And what is meant by the Sovereign's supremacy is, that no person in the realm has any such ecclesiastical power, as that he can, *per se*, command universally and irrespectively of the King; or that he can plead *exemption* from the King's authority, when exercised within certain definite limits, settled by law: that the Sovereign has a supreme controlling and authoritative power, for the supervising, ordering, and directing of affairs in things spiritual, just as he has in civil matters. Indeed, without such a power, the Ecclesiastical affairs of a realm could not well be administered. And for the exercise of such a power, we have Scripture precedent; *e.g.* in the acts of Joash and Hezekiah; the former of whom, purposing to renew the House of the Lord, and finding the Levites slack in collecting the necessary supplies, hasted them by means of his civil officers¹: and the latter proclaimed a public celebration of the Passover to the Lord, and required of all, even from Beersheba to Dan, to present themselves at it².

¹ 2 Chron. xxiv. 4 to 9.² 2 Chron. xxx. 1 to 6.

And in the arrangement of Ecclesiastical controversies, a similar supremacy is requisite, for the due execution of what spiritual Judges have, according to law, decided. The laws themselves appoint the modes and regulations whereby the Judges are to proceed. These Judges are either *Ordinaries*, which office belongeth only unto Prelates; or *Commissionary*, who may be Laymen. But to uphold and strengthen their particular jurisdictions, and to give force and effect to their decisions, there requireth a Supreme Head. This supremacy having been at one time grasped at, to an extraordinary degree, by the Bishop of Rome, it was for just considerations annexed to our Sovereign's royal prerogatives. And the desire which our particular opponents have herein, is to transfer the same to their Ecclesiastical Synods.

Now cases of *appeal* show *where* the supreme jurisdiction lies; and herein our Kings act in matters spiritual equally as in civil. But an objection is raised against this, founded on passages from the Law and the Gospel; and it is contended, that as from the one¹, "judgment in spiritual belongeth to God;" and from the other², that "every High Priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God;" hence that judgment in Church matters can only belong to those in the Ministry of the Church. But it is clear, that taking in the whole

¹ 2 Chron. xix. 6.

² Heb. v. 1.

scope of the Apostle's words in the passage, he is there speaking of strictly *priestly* duties, such as "offering gifts and sacrifices for sin;" which of course belong only to ordained persons. But jurisdiction and ruling authority are not so limited; neither were they by the Mosaic Law, under which, as hath already been shown, principality in spiritual affairs was the special prerogative of Kings¹.

It is true that Kings are not suited to sit and determine as *ordinary* judges, in matters of faith and religion; such must be taken from those most conversant therein. But so it is precisely in civil affairs. Yet this is no bar to a King's acting as *supreme head*; it being an error to think that the King's authority can have no force, except in that which he may *personally* do². And hence, as in civil affairs, the King appointeth those learned in the Law to be Judges *ordinarily*, and to decide according to the Law; and yet, though not himself occupying the seat of justice, he is notwithstanding virtually a party

¹ Moreover, it seems somewhat strange, that when in *other* matters the objectors will not allow that the Christian Church should even imitate anything from the abrogated Jewish one, they should in this particular point allege the example of the High Priests as an argument in their favour.

² In peculiar matters, therefore, requiring a more strictly professional education, missionary Judges, or *Commissaries*, are appointed, who may be Laymen, and whose office it is to assist in such cases as for the *Ordinary* might seem inexpedient.

therein; even so it is in spiritual affairs. Such persons are appointed to exercise ordinary jurisdiction, as are most fit by office and education; and to their decisions the King is virtually a party, and cometh in by his supremacy of power, to give authoritative force and effect thereto; being thus on reasonable and proper grounds, Supreme over all causes ecclesiastical and civil.

In early times, before Kings were converted to the Faith, this Supremacy of course existed not, and Bishops used to have direction of affairs; and when sovereign authority used to take part against them, they were wont to plead against it. But their words, under such circumstances, cannot with any reason be alleged; although, contrary to all reason, this is sometimes done now, and their opinions thus peculiarly spoken, are quoted as militating against our present practice.

Nor, again, when the contrary occurred, and when virtuous Christian Emperors felt a delicacy and reserve about assuming to themselves a supremacy in religious matters, are their actions and speeches, under those circumstances, to be construed as literally and stringently applicable to our present orderly and settled condition, as a Christian Church and kingdom.

In brief, all things with us are proceeded with and

settled according to the *due order of law*, whoever be the person that administers. It is not permitted, either to Prelate or Prince, to determine at his own discretion; but the law hath prescribed what both shall do. Their power, and the limits thereof, are bestowed and defined by Law, and publicly known. The entire Community and whole body politic establish the laws which confer this power; and the King, having bound himself to use the Law according to the power so bestowed, and each branch of ecclesiastical and civil being legally managed by its own peculiar *ordinaries*, under his supremacy, it follows, after all, that the whole Community have their own decrees, as it were, carried into execution by their Supreme Head, in his administrative acts. Thus much for the King's Supremacy.

IX. *On the EXEMPTION of the Sovereign from Ecclesiastical censure, and other Judicial power.*

THE last thing concerning the King's supremacy is, whether he be himself thereby *exempted* from the operation of the judicial power which Ecclesiastical Consistories exercise over others.

It seems, at first sight, requisite that there should be no one without a *control* of some kind upon his conduct. Now, the two passions of fear and love towards a Governor, continue generally to work good

on the subjects in his Commonwealth in this respect: and if, therefore, private men, knowing as they do, that evil deeds shall be punished by royal authority, do, notwithstanding, commit offences, in the hope of a *possible* escape; how much sorer a temptation is it to those in supreme power (who, it is admitted, are not always so virtuous as they ought) to give a loose to the evil passions of frail human nature, if they be considered as *irresponsible* to any earthly authority. And yet this seems, in the opinion of many wise and learned men, as a point necessary to be admitted. We will therefore adduce and examine, somewhat, the opinions on both sides.

By those who contend that Kings are responsible to God alone, it is urged, 1st, That as there is an origin or spring, communicating motion to all natural bodies, but itself immovable; so, in bodies politic, there must be some one unpunishable, or no one else could suffer punishment. That, in fact, as punishment proceeds from *superiors*, there must be some fountain-head, deriving authority to others, but not receiving it from them; otherwise justice would move in a circle, infinitely, every superior having his superior without end. And this Head must be the Sovereign; private men being subject to the magistrate; the magistrate to the Sovereign; and the Sovereign only to God.

Again, the objectors to this doctrine hold, for instance, that the King may be subject to excommunication, as a Christian brother subject to the laws of the Church. Now it is replied, on this point, that a King is a Christian brother¹; but then he is such a brother, as one unto whom, after the example of Joseph's sheaf, all the rest are subject². And though the Jewish Church had the sword of excommunication, we never read of their using it against their Kings, albeit that many of them were notoriously defaulters.

And as to St. Paul's words, "Do ye not judge them that are within³;" whence, and from other passages similar, it is inferred that Kings, being in the Church, may be judged by the Church; such sentences must be understood *generally*, and not as entirely forbidding exceptions. Just as, under the Law, idolaters and adulterers were to be put to death; and yet neither Manasses nor David suffered at man's hands for their respective criminalities; so it is with respect to Christian Kings; the legal punishment reacheth not to them, albeit the grievousness of the sin cleaves to them, and rendereth them, for that

¹ On this ground, indeed, the Jews were forbidden to choose an *alien* as King, in order that the head and members might not be foreign in blood to each other.

² Gen. xxxvii. 7.

³ 1 Cor. v. 12.

very reason, the more obnoxious to divine chastisement¹.

Concerning, indeed, the power of excommunication², as far as regards a mere refusal to admit any notorious transgressor to a participation of the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, till his humble penitent mind be made manifest, we hold, that herein every King is everywhere bound to abide by the decision of the Minister of Christ. But with respect to *judicial* authority to punish malefactors, if our

¹ Bishop Jewel's opinion is unfairly alleged, as countenancing the subjection of Kings to Ecclesiastical dominion. Whereas, in point of fact, he is arguing against the Pope's supremacy, and states that, as in his *priestly office* a Minister of Christ is superior to Kings, even so the Pope being a *Priest*, as such, is their superior. But this clearly has nothing to do with the King's supreme power of jurisdiction and judicial authority.

² Two examples are alleged of Emperors: viz., one of the Philips, and Theodosius, submitting themselves, the one to a discipline for his fault at the hands of Babylos, Bishop of Antioch, and the other to a prohibition from entering the Church for a season, pronounced by Ambrose, Bishop of Milan. But it is clear, on an investigation of the whole particulars, that these were nothing more than strong censures and admonitions, *individually* pronounced, by men who were zealous and courageous enough to warn even Emperors of their faults, and of the punishment they merited; which cautions and admonitions were received and submitted to, in a spirit of meekness, by those to whom they were addressed: but they had nothing in them of a *judicial* sentence, or authoritative excommunication. For, besides that they were pronounced *instantly*, and without any previous formal decree, usual in all regular proceedings, the Bishops themselves were not, in regard to the locality of their respective Bishopricks, legally and properly *competent* to pronounce a judicial sentence upon the parties, who did not fall within their provinces.

King be as the Jewish Kings, a supreme Lord, then it seems clear, that no one hath power to chastise him, save God; inasmuch as there is no other that hath judicial authority over him.

Wherefore, since the Kings of England are in their own dominions supreme, and can have no peer, it seems absurd that any person, ecclesiastical or civil, subject unto them, should possibly be thought to exercise coercive jurisdiction over them, so as to be a superior's superior and judge! And, therefore, that no one can pronounce against them the sentence of excommunication, which is the heaviest that can be passed.

And hence, until stronger reasons shall be alleged to the contrary, we conclude that Kings are lawfully exempted from the jurisdiction of Ecclesiastical Courts.

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THE END.

